

ISSN 2231-7317 RM14.90
02





PATEK PHILIPPE
GENEVE

Begin your own tradition.

You never actually own
a Patek Philippe.

You merely look after it for
the next generation.



Annual Calendar Ref. 5205G

Tel: (65) 6732 1506
patek.com



Make the best of every ground. The SUVs from Mercedes-Benz.

Mercedes-Benz
The best or nothing.

Mercedes-Benz Malaysia Sdn Bhd (596096-H) Customer Care Center: 1-800-88-1133 customercare_my@daimler.com **www.mercedes-benz.com.my**
Mercedes-Benz Services Malaysia Sdn Bhd (1011573-P) Customer Service Center: 1-800-22-6237 mbsm_cs@daimler.com **www.mercedes-benz.com.my/financial**

KUALA LUMPUR • Cycle & Carriage Bintang Berhad (7378-D) (Jln Tun Razak) Tel: 03-2144 9999 • Hap Seng Star Sdn Bhd (659844-H) Tel: 03-2116 9228 • Hap Seng Star Sdn Bhd (659844-H) (Jln Ipoh) Tel: 03-2035 5966 • Hap Seng Star Sdn Bhd (659844-H) (Kinrara) Tel: 03-8073 3891 • NZ Wheels Sdn Bhd (329033-V) (Bangsar) Tel: 03-2287 3999 • **SELANGOR** • Cycle & Carriage Bintang Berhad (7378-D) (Petaling Jaya) Tel: 03-7872 8000 • Cycle & Carriage Bintang Berhad (7378-D) (Mutiara Damansara) Tel: 03-7711 6000 • Cycle & Carriage Bintang Berhad (7378-D) (Glenmarie) Tel: 03-55679299 • NZ Wheels Sdn Bhd (329033-V) (Klang) Tel: 03-3341 3333 • Hap Seng Star Sdn Bhd (659844-H) (Balakong) Tel: 03-8964 5188 • **KEDAH & PERLIS** • Asbenz Motors Sdn Bhd (639691-H) (Sungai Petani) Tel: 04-431 7000 • Mofaz Exotic Car Sdn Bhd (182538-P) Tel: 04-955 5002 • Cycle & Carriage Bintang (Northern) Sdn Bhd (114255-P) (Alor Setar) Tel: 04-732 7732



Welcome a new breed of luxury SUVs that is engineered to take on any road you uncover. With each vehicle offering a different set up to cater to your individual pursuits in life, there is a model to fit all. Combining driving comfort, a sporty touch and remarkable agility, each SUV impresses with impeccable road-handling abilities and power. All to satiate your hunger for adventure.

Book a test drive now for GLC, GLE and GLE Coupé at www.mercedes-benz.com.my/suv #hungryforadventure

• **P.PINANG** • Cycle & Carriage Bintang (Northern) Sdn Bhd (114255-P) (Georgetown) Tel: 04-263 9834 • Cycle & Carriage Bintang (Northern) Sdn Bhd (114255-P) (Juru) Tel: 04-508 8058 • **PERAK** • Cycle & Carriage Bintang (Perak) Sdn Bhd (1554-H) Tel: 05-506 4266 • **N. SEMBILAN** • Minsoon Credit Corporation (M) Sdn Bhd (21760-X) Tel: 06-762 5321 • **TERENGGANU** • Mofaz Exotic Car Sdn Bhd (182538-P) Tel: 09-626 1200 • **MELAKA** • MBSA Automotive Malaysia Sdn Bhd (633065-H) Tel: 06-282 2992 • **JOHOR** • Cycle & Carriage Bintang Berhad (7378-D) Tel: 07-238 2299 • NZ Wheels Sdn Bhd (329033-V) Tel: 07-355 7218 • BR Jaya Sdn Bhd (357552-H) Tel: 07-434 1981 • **PAHANG** • NZ Wheels Sdn Bhd (329033-V) Tel: 09-568 5888 • **KELANTAN** • Mofaz Exotic Car Sdn Bhd (182538-P) Tel: 09-747 4500 • **LABUAN** • NA Classic Sdn Bhd (288100-D) Tel: 087-425 216 • **SABAH** • Hap Seng Star Sdn Bhd (8953-A) Tel: 088-275 766 • **SARAWAK** • Hap Seng Star Sdn Bhd (8953-A) Tel: 082-333 460





PRADA

MATTHEW BEARD
NEW YORK, NOVEMBER 2015



Watch Xavier Dolan's exclusive interview at louisvuitton.com.



LOUIS VUITTON



MENSWEAR LEATHERGOODS ACCESSORIES
ALFRED DUNHILL LTD dunhill.com



ALFRED DUNHILL

CONTENTS

FEBRUARY 2016, VOLUME 6, NO. 59

46
What I've learned: Bruno Senna
On Formula E, being a geek and a man's best quality.
Interviewed by Noor Amylia Hilda

48
What I've learned: Harvey Keitel
On growing up in Brooklyn, getting old, being in the Marines and the human race.
Interviewed by Ben Mitchell

50
Hidetoshi Nakata
Once hailed as a prodigy in the fields, this retired footballer now travels through his homeland bringing Japanese craftmanship to the world.
By Sim Wie Boon

58
The hardest road
We look into the journey of British rider, Chris Froome as he beats back allegations of doping.
By Richard Moore

66
The gorgeous balance of Emilia Clarke
Friendly yet fierce, we speak to the Mother of Dragons about her life, family and experiences.
By Benjamin Markovits

72
The woman who saves the worst people among us
The Unabomber, the Boston Bomber and many more. Meet the woman who defends these 'monsters'.
By Jennifer Percy

156
Travel: the good spa guide
Men need pampering too, and we have the perfect spots for you.
By Miranda Collinge, Johnny Davis, Catherine Hayward, Tom Macklin, Charlie Teasdale and Teo van den Broeke

Continued on page 14

On the cover: Hidetoshi Nakata photographed by Chuan Looi. Jacket and trousers both by Dior Homme; black gold and diamonds cross necklace and bracelets all by Damiani; white t-shirt, stylist's own.



CORBIS



GUCCI

gucci.com

CONTENTS

FEBRUARY 2016, VOLUME 6, NO. 59

Continued from page 12

82
Manual
Sort out your flowers—Other people's families—Regarding arguments—Elotes: The street-style corn—Before you buy/build/try-Theatres of warmth—The go bag.

87
Style: Brooklyn is burning
Turning up the heat and blazing through the New York boroughs for the Spring/Summer collections.

98
Style: Man about town
Easy layers to kick-start your year.

108
Style: Essentials
What to wear to work this 2016.

113
Style: Fashion
A sneak peek into Spring 2016, something for the rainy season and the truth behind navy.

120
Style: Machines
The tools you need to prepare your meat and this year's most anticipated high performance cars.

124
Style: Grooming
Wash away your morning blues and keep yourself clean with a prime time shaver.

126
Style: Drinks
What your cocktail cabinet needs.

146
Esquire 10: Illustrated needs
Drawing inspirations from around you.

Continued on page 16



CORBIS



Jaeger-LeCoultre Boutique
G 36, Indulge Floor, Starhill Gallery
Tel. +603 2303 6088

JAEGER-LECOULTRE
Open a whole new world

CONTENTS

FEBRUARY 2016, VOLUME 6, NO. 59



Continued from page 14

18
This way in
Six degrees of separation and you.

24
MAHB: Vocabulary
Words maketh a man.

25
MAHB: Agenda
Death Cab for Cutie, *Tales from the Bedroom*, *Kebaya Jazz* and some other stuff to get your February going.

26
MAHB: Film
Why reinvention is a necessity in Hollywood. Plus: The Oscars.

30
MAHB: Music
The perfect love song.

32
MAHB: Television
How melodrama killed the TV star. Plus: A look into HBO's latest series, *Vinyl*.

34
MAHB: Media Man
The death of the lad mag.

35
MAHB: Digital Man
As robots take over, where does that leave us?

36
MAHB: Drinking
A short guide to owning your own watering hole.

37
MAHB: Food
Highbrow chefs, lowbrow ingredients. Plus: A vegetarian centrepiece for a healthy banquet.

40
MAHB: Sport
Millionaire athletes and how they spend their money.

41
MAHB: Health
Here's your ultimate training circuit.

42
MAHB: Humour
How the Chinese zodiac was decided. Maybe.

43
MAHB: Sex
What's so great about Valentine's Day?

44
A Thousand Words
A look into the fading tradition of Chinese New Year.
By Loke Poh Lin

CORBIS



1500 °C OF HIGH TECHNOLOGY

Sculpted at 1500 °C, the monobloc middle case of the TUDOR Black Shield – made entirely of high-tech ceramic – delivers a level of resistance which makes it extraordinarily durable, even in extreme conditions. In customised matt black, the aesthetics of the Ducati Diavel are as powerful and unique as those of the TUDOR Black Shield.

BLACK SHIELD

Self-winding mechanical movement, waterproof to 150 m, 42 mm case and bezel, both in high-technology ceramic. Visit tudorwatch.com and explore more.

DUCATI

Timing Partner

TUDOR



FROM THE HORRORS OF THE BATTLE OF THE SOMME during World War I, to the mega-bucks, mega-movie *Star Wars: The Force Awakens*, let's play Six Degrees of Separation...

William Harold Coltman was the most decorated "other rank" in WWI, even though he was a conscientious objector and won the highest honours from both the British and French governments without ever picking up a gun. He showed his bravery as a stretcher bearer. In the '70s the massively popular British TV show *Dad's Army* first aired. One of the characters, Private Godfrey, was a highly decorated veteran of the Somme who was also a conscientious objector stretcher bearer. The character was played by real-life Somme veteran Arnold Ridley. Fast-forward 40 years to *Star Wars: The Force Awakens*. The character of Rey is played by Daisy Ridley, great-niece of Arnold Ridley.

Six Degrees of Separation, and all without mentioning Kevin Bacon.

ESQUIRE ON THE WEB

FAREWELL, ZIGGY STARDUST

We mourn the passing of David Bowie, but many years ago, he did an Esquire US What I've Learned interview. Visit our website to revisit some words of wisdom.

SALUTE A SHAKESPEARE MASTER

Yes, he was known as Snape, but Alan Rickman's mastery was well beyond that. We've compiled a list of his greatest acting moments for you to commemorate why he was so loved.

CONNECT WITH US

You know once a month is not enough, so give us a like or a follow on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter—where you can get updates on our favourite weekend events, fashion and what goes on behind-the-scenes here at Esquire.

ESQUIRE ON THE GO

Did you know? Esquire Malaysia is available for purchase on iTunes. Sign up for a digital subscription to enjoy 55 percent off the cover price. You'll also get your first issue FREE with our 30-day trial subscription offer.

www.esquire.my facebook.com/esquiremy twitter.com/esquiremy instagram.com/esquiremy

EVERETT COLLECTION



BAUME & MERCIER

MAISON D'HORLOGERIE GENEVE 1830

CORTINA WATCH Fahrenheit 88 / KLCC Suria
SINCERE FINE WATCHES KLCC Suria / Pavilion
SWISS WATCH GALLERY Komtar JBCC

THIS WAY IN

Esquire MALAYSIA

EDITORIAL
editor@esquire.my

Editor-in-Chief
Simon Burgess

Deputy Editor
Sim Wie Boon

Watch Editor
Leong Wong

Web Editor
Shermian Lim

Associate Fashion Editor
Ian Loh

Fashion Assistant
Sarah Chong

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS & STYLISTS
Aidil Rusli, Alaa Lolly Mamdouh, Andrew Whitelaw, Ben Mitchell, Ben Ng, Benjamin Markovits, Carol RH Malasig, Catherine Hayward, Charlie Teasdale, Chiaki Sabata, Claire Salomon, Fay Khoo, Janie Cai, Joanne Kam, Jennifer Percy, Joey Yap, John Lim, Johnny Davis, Juliana Gimenez, Kuah Jenhan, Lim Siu Fang, Loke Poh Lin, Marcus Wong, Matt Armitage, Michael Bracewell, Miranda Collinge, Nigel Stanislaus, Noor Amylia Hilda, Paul Schrodt, Paul Wilson, Rachel Fellows, Richard Moore, Russell Norman, Shawn Goh, Sophia Goh, Tom Macklin, Teo van den Broeke, Ty Shearn, Vilde Eugenie Liverud, Will Hersey, Zack Yusof, Zena May Hendrick

CONTRIBUTING PHOTOGRAPHERS & ILLUSTRATORS
Caleb and Gladys, Chuan Looi, Delvin Xian, Janne Iivonen, Jun Hun Yap, Lipwei, Marcus Wong, Peter Oumanski, Raymond Lee, Sam Armstrong, Sam Hofman, Tom van Schelven, Shivraj Gohil/ Current E, Uli Knörzer , Vincent De Diego, Vincent Paul Yong, Vincent Peters, Zentrix Chiu

ART
production@mongooseasia.com

Art Director
Rebecca Chew

Associate Art Director
Kathryn Tan

Senior Designer
Aini Suraya Nasaruddin

Production Executive
Nor Faridah Mustafa

ADVERTISING
advertising@esquire.my

Account Directors
Ashley Loh, Nicholas Ng

Account Executive
Lee Kerr

MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS
marketing@esquire.my

Head of Marketing & Communications
Thanabalasingam Balakrishnan

Marketing Executive
Kyren Thomas

EVENTS
events@mongooseasia.com

Head of Events
Amee Halim-Illiya

Assistant Manager, Events
Alyssa Nazaleq

WEBSITE
esquire.my

Web Manager
Elana Chee Mei Ling

Digital Marketing Manager
Averell Leiking

Web Developer
Wan Nadzirah Bt. Zulkhefli

Senior Web Designer
Vincent Chua

OPERATIONS
accounts@mongooseasia.com

Head Of Operations
Camy Yee

Junior Accounts Executive
Siti Fazillah Yunus

Accounts Assistant
Norshakila Abdullah

HR Manager
Badrulzaman Satibi

IT Support Engineer
Reshwant Singh Dhillon

Circulation Manager
Ignatius JC Edwin

Circulation Assistant
Mohd Khairie Abdul Karim, Mohd Sukri, Alya Samsudin

Dispatch
Muhammad Fitri Badrul Sham, Mohd Khairil Hafizie Mohd Zamzam

MANAGEMENT
mongooseasia.com

Group CEO
Graham Paling

Chief Operating Officer
Mark Harvey

Chief Content Officer
Matthew Bellotti

Editorial Director
Lynette Ow

Group Business Development Director
Patrick Brennan

International Business Development Director
Richard Beatty

Executive Publisher
Intan Shafinas bte Meor Zailan

HEARST MAGAZINES INTERNATIONAL

President/CEO
Duncan Edwards

Senior Vice President/CFO/ General Manager
Simon Horne

Senior Vice President/ Director of Licensing and Business Development
Gautam Ranji

Senior Vice President/ International Publishing Director
Jeannette Chang

Senior Vice President/ Editorial Director
Kim St. Clair Bodden

Executive Creative Director/ International Branding
Peter Yates

Fashion/Entertainment Director
Kristen Ingersoll

Senior International Edition Editor
Luis Veronese

ESQUIRE INTERNATIONAL EDITIONS

Editors-in-chief
Bulgaria: Hristo Zapryanov
China: Li Haipeng
Colombia: Francisco J Escobar S
Czech Republic: Jiri Roth
Greece: Kostas N Tsitsas
Hong Kong: Kwong Lung Kit
Indonesia: Dwi Sutarjantono
Kazakhstan: Ildar Khaibullin
Korea: Heesik Min
Latin America: Manuel Martínez Torres
Middle East: Jeremy Lawrence
Netherlands: Arno Kantelberg
Philippines: Erwin Romulo
Poland: Filip Niedenthal
Romania: Andrei Theodor Iovu
Russia: Igor Sadreev
Singapore: Zul Andra
Spain: Andrés Rodriguez
Taiwan: Steve Chen
Thailand: Panu Burusratanapant
Turkey: Togan Noyan
United Kingdom: Alex Bilmes
Vietnam: Nguyen Thanh Nhan
United States: David Granger

mongoose

Published by
Mongoose Publishing Sdn Bhd (580051K), Level 36 Menara AmBank, 8 Jalan Yap Kwan Seng, 50450 Kuala Lumpur; Tel: 03–2166 6650; Fax: 03–2166 6651.

Printed and colour separation by
Times Offset (M) Sdn Bhd (194695–W), Bangunan Times Publishing, Lot 46 Subang Hi Tech Industrial Park, Batu Tiga 40000, Shah Alam. The views expressed in the articles published are not necessarily those of Mongoose Publishing Sdn Bhd (580051–K).

While every reasonable care is taken in compiling the magazine, the publisher shall not be held liable for any omission, error or inaccuracy. Please notify the publisher in writing of any such omission, error or inaccuracy. Editorial contributors are welcome, but unsolicited materials are submitted at the sender's risk.

The publisher cannot accept any resposibility for loss or damage.

All rights reserved by Mongoose Publishing Sdn Bhd (580051–K). No part of this publication may be reproduced in any form without the publisher's permission in writing.
KDN PP17226/01/2013(031365).

A proud memeber of
Magazine Publishers Association

MARTELL
COGNAC
FONDÉE EN 1715



#MARTELLFRENCHTOUCH
MARTELL.COM

ENJOY OUR QUALITY RESPONSIBLY.

La French Touch
by MARTELL

@Shandrewpr Carrie Minter with 6 words on @esquiremy. Photo by @isaiahmays

@seriousmockery @esquiremy A Scientific Reason Why Siri's Voice is Female

@kyralynntaylor @esquiremy What I've Learned: Nurul Izzah

@nlkj @esquiremy What I've Learned - Lim Teong Kim

@verikhool took @esquiremy's asshole quiz and i got "...your consideration for other people prevents you from being an asshole" #truestory

@ashleycmsalazar @esquirelat feature @EsquireME @esquiremy @ESQStyle @ESQTV @esquire @EsquireTurkiye @EsquirePH @EsquireEs @EsquireUK

@CFPages Our #FollowersTop5 in December > "Adam Driver / JJ Abrams" #TheForceAwakens by @esquiremy

@babaruh Esquire Malaysia swimsuit editorial. @esquiremy @ESQStyle @ESQTV @esquire @EsquireTurkiye @EsquirePH

@wolfisin Thanks @esquiremy for featuring my book #kelunding

@PeterHughDavis Hello sailor! Back in 2011 for @EsquireMY, styled by cris_yong. Shot by Fai from #SundayStudio. https://www.instagram.com/p/_1dcFELI8x/

@wolfisin Kelunding gets a flip by the good people at @esquiremy. Read their review here http://www.esquire.my/Entertainment/Books/article/Kelunding:-conversations-with-the-city

@syafeeqKL That's it la, dah famous masuk majalah posing Kat swimming pool, masuk melody segala, sure out la lepas ni

@verikhool Adam Driver is on @esquiremy 's December issue! So in loveeee :DDD

@CyberSAFEmy Instill cyber safety in amongst that, then we are good as go. #cybersafety

@SandraEMartin @spchronicles Have you seen While We're Young? @moniquesavin @CFPages @esquiremy

@spchronicles @SandraEMartin @moniquesavin @CFPages @esquiremy Which is obvs not a requirement for crushes but still.

@spchronicles @SandraEMartin @moniquesavin @CFPages @esquiremy Wow - good memory, Sandra! Yep, I think he's hot (and also a really interesting actor).

@SandraEMartin @moniquesavin @CFPages @esquiremy Nope - that was @spchronicles

EDITOR'S LETTER

Simon Burgess, editor-in-chief

AS STARTS TO THE YEAR GO, it's not been a great one, has it? Two days after his birthday in early January, David Bowie passed away. Soon after that, with obits to Bowie still in the newspapers, Alan Rickman shuffled off his mortal coil. Two greats, both taken by cancer, both aged 69.

Of all the glowing tributes paid to them, it struck me as particularly thought provoking when one person, speaking of Bowie, wrote that we should be grateful that we were alive during his time.

Your place in history—that short timeframe in which you inhabit this Earth—shapes who you are and how you think. Had I been born, say, 100 years earlier, then it might have been acceptable, expected even, for me to be openly racist, to be homophobic and to nod in approval as another single mother got carted off to the insane asylum for having a baby out of wedlock.

And yet here, in 2016, we don't think that way. Why? The reasons are many, but one worth considering is the role of those mavericks who forced people to challenge their thinking, and with it, the status quo. People like Emmeline Pankhurst, Martin Luther King, Nelson Mandela or Mahatma Gandhi, all of whom were so convinced that their cause was just that they were prepared to risk their lives to see right prevail.

Where do people like Bowie and Rickman sit in that pantheon? Clearly, they aren't even close but, to be fair to them, not many people are. No, their legacies are much more personal. Whereas Mandela and Gandhi changed the world, Bowie and Rickman changed peoples' worlds.

I'll remember Bowie's music imploring everyone to dance at the Friday night disco in my home village. And I'll remember discreetly brushing away a tear watching Rickman in *Truly, Madly, Deeply* for the first time.

Both, through their art, challenged the way we think and both were masters of their crafts, through which they made more vibrant the tapestry of our individual and collective lives.

It isn't surprising then that our reaction to the news was genuine sadness. But perhaps, after the initial shock, we should reflect and be happy that we were alive during their lives.

If you celebrate Chinese New Year, *Gong Xi Fa Cai*! Let's hope it's a good one, without any fear.

FROM OUR INSTAGRAM



@thejeromevargas
"ATM | Morning read, Esquire Malaysia and Borneo Bulletin Yearbook. I was hoping to read more Malaysian articles though. This will go to my stash of Esquire Collection from the countries I've visited."



iancanfly
Alphabet soup! #japas#heybabekl"

OUT OF CONTEXT QUOTE OF THE MONTH

"They didn't want me to go to boarding school. I wanted to. My brother was already going and I fancied his friends."

—Emilia Clarke *(See page 66)*

NUMBER OF THE MONTH

15

Traditionally the number of days one celebrates for Chinese New Years. Get ready for a lot of food, non-stop relatives visiting and calling, as well as loud, annoying music.

(See page 44)


enjoy responsibly
open your world
Heineken
Heineken
Heineken_MY
HeinekenMY
Heineken.com/MY
Guinness Anchor Marketing Sdn Bhd (5971-D) Sungei Way Brewery, Lot 1135, Batu 9, Jalan Klang Lama, 46000 Petaling Jaya, Selangor Darul Ehsan
TRADE MARK
Heineken®

THE VOCABULARY

Germinate your flowery nomenclature; it could help you sow your oats (pun intended).



Noun: A dislike, contempt or ingrained prejudice against women. A real man does not need to put down his female counterpart to make himself feel good or important. Only an a*****e does that. And an Esquire man is not an a*****e.
(See page 34)



Noun: An annual calendar containing important dates and information such as astronomical dates and tide tables. Usually in a handbook form, and can also contain information of general interest as well as a sport or pastime. Somewhat an adult diary/planner/schedule book. So put away the phone calendar and get a proper one for yourself.
(See page 44)



Noun: A short excursion or journey for pleasure; in other words, a short vacation but one that you're actually happy about, not that holiday you took with your annoying family members whom you absolutely detest.
(See page 156)



Noun: A mutual trust and friendship among people who spend a lot of time together. Kids these days call it "besties" or some rubbish like that.
(See page 48)



Noun: Something usually belonging or appropriated to a period other than that in which it existed. Usually something that is conspicuously old-fashioned.
(See page 32)

EUPHEMISM OF THE MONTH



A French culinary phrase which means "putting in place" or to set up; basically, fancy chef talk for putting out the ingredients needed for the night's menu. A phrase to use when cooking over at the in-laws and having a few nephews or nieces helping you prepare dinner. Don't expect them to know it off-hand, lest you sound like a pretentious prick.
(See page 37)

THIS MONTH

Six events that will get you off that couch and moving.

ALL DAY



Eat up! From the people that brought you *Urbanscapes*, comes *Taste of Tiffin*, a city-wide celebration of food and drink slated for the second half of the year. Join them for their launch party, which will see a slew of drinks, food and fun happening from February 27 to 28 at Publika. *For more information, visit* tiffinkl.tiffinbrunch.peatix.com

5 HOURS



Feel it. The second edition of *Good Vibes Presents* brings you the iconic indie rock band Death Cab for Cutie to set you and your friends in for good old-fashioned feels trip. Catch them at KL Live on February 27. *For more information, visit* viagogo.com

4 HOURS



Keep it sneaky. The Malaysia Philharmonic Ochestra returns to the stage to present *Spy vs. Spy*, conducted by Arnie Roth. Get ready for a night of thrills and espionage, as the orchestra looks to revive the themes of *Mission: Impossible*, *Goldfinger*, *The Spy Who Shagged Me* and *Pink Panther*. Happening at Dewan Filharmonik Petronas on February 19 and 20. *For more information, visit* mpo.com.my

3 HOURS



Get a room! After two sold out shows in 2014 and 2015, *Tales from the Bedroom* is back again, and this time bringing you the best of both years with a new twist. From awkward one night stands, sneaky quickies, squeamish pillow talk and phone sex to the most obnoxious of conversations, this Valentine's Day, get ready for some good laughs. Happening at KLPac from February 12 to 14. *For more information, visit* klpac.org

2 HOURS



Listen and be enthralled. Especially by the ambient sounds recorded by New Zealand sound artist Paul Timings. Focusing on the totality of sound and individual engagement with sound, Timings looks to lace together and build a digital algorithm which forms a rich, balanced, natural and other worldly experience. Expect sounds of water, construction noises post-earthquake as well as some *Dikir Barat*. Happening at Shalini Ganendra Fine Art Gallery until February 15. *For more information, visit* shaliniganendra.com

1 HOUR

Keep it classy. February is all about love, so spice up your night with some classic sexy "Kebaya Jazz" brought to you by Ida Mariana. Let the music take you back to an era of lacy *kebayas* and old-time jazz tunes from Anekke Gronloh, Maria Menado and Bing Slamet. Happening at No Black Tie on February 5 and 6, *for more information, visit* noblacktie.com.my



NO TIME

WORDS BY SIM WIE BOON.



MaHB / Film **by Aidil Rusli**

KARMA CHAMELEON

Why necessity is the mother of reinvention in Hollywood.



DICTIONARIES USUALLY define reinvent as: "to present something in a different or new way", and reinvention as "to remake or make over, as in a different form". With that in mind, film seems like the perfect medium for an endless amount of reinventions. Writers and directors concoct and realise scenarios that are far different from their normal daily lives. Actors pretend to be someone else on every single project. So reinventing yourself (or your public persona, actually) on a regular basis would actually seem to be the easiest and most logical thing to do if you have a career in film, whether as an actor or a director.

But film is a business, it demands stability, predictability and consistency for marketing reasons, which explains why most actors and directors make just one type of film. Tom Cruise may be slumming it once in a while in a film like *Magnolia*, but his A-list status demands that he continue his career on the action blockbuster path with films like the *Mission: Impossible* franchise and *Edge of Tomorrow*.

So even though, in theory, films seem like the perfect breeding ground for it, reinvention is more the exception rather than the rule. Actors like Daniel Day Lewis, Christian Bale and Sean Penn don't count, however, as they've made a career out of being chameleons, and that's their public persona.

One of the biggest and earliest examples of an actor reinventing himself is James Stewart, who went from a successful and steady career as America's favourite everyman in films like *Mr Smith Goes to Washington*, *The Shop Around the Corner* and *It's a Wonderful Life* to a successful and steady career as an explorer of the dark heart of America in films like *Winchester '73*, *The Man from Laramie*, and of course, Hitchcock masterpieces like *Vertigo* and *Rear Window*.

This transition from low- or middlebrow films to highbrow and more "serious" films is usually the path chosen by actors wanting to reinvent themselves in order to be taken seriously. Even directors have gone through this path, like David Cronenberg who went from making yucky body horror films like *Shivers*, *Rabid* and *Videodrome* to a Cannes and arthouse films like *A History of Violence*, *A Dangerous Method* and *Cosmopolis*.

Some reinventions—like the curious case of Bill Murray, who went from being everybody's favourite clown in *Caddyshack*, *Meatballs* and *Ghostbusters* to everyone's favourite melancholic older man in films like *Rushmore*, *Lost in Translation* and *Broken Flowers*—are simply a deepening of the actor's public persona.

Because these are well-trodden paths of reinvention, they tend to be less exciting and less edgy than the more unorthodox and baffling ones. It's all fine and dandy wanting to be taken seriously as an artist, which then leads to more serious work. But how does one explain something like Liam Neeson's metamorphosis from critically acclaimed performances in *Schindler's List* and *Michael Collins* to the action hero that he is today in films like *Taken* and *Non-Stop*?

And let's not even begin to fathom the reasons why an American indie wunderkind like David Gordon Green went from being compared to Terrence Malick with films like *George Washington* and *All the Real Girls* to being trashed by critics for making hilarious stoner comedies like *Pineapple Express* and *Your Highness*. That's practically a straight reverse from highbrow to lowbrow.

As legendary film critic Manny Farber once famously wrote in his essay "White Elephant Art vs. Termite Art" that, "A peculiar fact about termite-tapeworm-fungus-moss-art is that it goes always forward eating its own boundaries, and, likely as not, leaves nothing in its path other than the signs of eager, industrious, unkempt activity."

And it's also for this very reason that my opinion of Taylor Lautner ("Jacob of the *Twilight* franchise fame) changed radically the minute he walked onto the screen in the latest Adam Sandler comedy, *The Ridiculous 6*. Delivering a totally unself-conscious and hilarious breakout comic performance that would not seem out of place in a Farrelly brothers classic like *Dumb and Dumber*, it's a great example of an actor reinventing himself with eager, industrious and unkempt activity. What's not to love about that?

@wearecouple

EVERETT COLLECTION



TICKETS ON SALE NOW!

NOW IN 3 GREAT LOCATIONS

2 APRIL 2016
PENANG
Registration Closes 29 Feb 2016

30 JULY 2016
PUTRAJAYA

7 JANUARY 2017
JOHOR

TICKET PRICES

5 KM	RM 78 PER LOCATION
12 KM	RM 88 PER LOCATION
21 KM	RM 98 PER LOCATION

10% DISCOUNT WHEN YOU BOOK ALL 3 LOCATIONS

PLUS SPECIAL TRIFECTA MEDAL

BE A PART OF MALAYSIA'S LARGEST NIGHT RUN SERIES!

#MHWHNightRun #3TimesTheRun #AIAVitalityMY

VISIT OUR WEBSITE TO REGISTER

www.mens-health.com.my
@menshealthmalaysia @menshealthmy menshealthmalaysia

www.womens-health.com.my
@womenshealthmy womenshealthmalaysia

MaHB / Film by Paul Wilson

AND THE OSCAR GOES TO...

Which 2015 movies have what it takes to woo the Academy? Let our guide decide.


1


2


3


4


5

	Historical civil rights drama?	Based on a true story?	With contemporary resonance?	About a famous person?
1. SUFFRAGETTE	In Edwardian London, working-class women put their lives on the line to win the vote. So, yes.	"Inspired by the women who inspired the world."	Don't you read *The Guardian*'s "Comment Is Free"?	Carey Mulligan plays a fictional figure, but veteran Academy fave Meryl Streep shows up as Emmeline Pankhurst.
2. LEGEND	Historical, certainly.	The "notorious true story" of the Kray twins, according to the poster.	Only if you're in formal menswear (which we are).	Two, as it goes. "Legendary" East End gangsters Ronnie and Reggie, both played by Tom Hardy.
3. TRUMBO	Screenwriter Dalton Trumbo refuses to take anti-communist Hollywood blacklisting quietly.	Yep, just like Trumbo's *Spartacus*.	You try being a screenwriter in these days of reactionary right-wing fearmongering.	Famous in Hollywood (which is what matters).
4. STEVE JOBS	If you're Jobs's ex-wife and daughter.	Walter Isaacson's version of it.	Especially for those of us who recently downloaded iOS9.	Not just famous, a "visionary genius" who "changed the world".
5. THE DANISH GIRL	Eddie Redmayne plays the first ever male-to-female transsexual.	Inspired by the "extraordinary true story", actually.	Transgender tales could not be more current.	Missed a trick there.
6. CAROL	Not far off: a lesbian affair between a married woman and a store clerk in '50s New York.	No—based on Patricia Highsmith's novel. That's right: someone actually made all this up! Amazing!	Well, they don't mention the possibility of same-sex marriage, but their struggle is hardly unrelated.	No!
7. BRIDGE OF SPIES	Cold War espionage thriller from Steven Spielberg.	You betcha, of humble Bronx-born lawyer (Tom Hanks) who negotiates a spy-swap with Soviets.	"Contemporary things were in my mind," says Spielberg. "Drones. Guantanamo Bay. Cyberhacking..."	Francis Gary Powers, the U-2 pilot shot down over Russia in 1960.
8. THE REVENANT	Period frontier drama; reportedly "hell" for the actors. So someone's civil rights–and how did the bears feel?	Yes, of a fur trapper played by Leonardo Di Caprio, left for dead after being mauled by a bear.	Fur-trapping? Not so much.	No.
9. SPOTLIGHT	How *The Boston Globe*'s investigative team uncovered the paedophile priests scandal in 2002.	Yes it is: see previous answer for details.	Absolutely.	Only God, who is mentioned often.
10. THE HATEFUL EIGHT	Yes, but without the "civil rights" bit—an omission many had a problem with in Quentin Tarantino's *Django Unchained*.	Heck no!	Only on the soundtrack.	No.

LAST YEAR'S BEST ACTOR OSCAR went to Benedict Cumberbatch for his spookily lifelike portrayal of the legendary President of England Daniel Day-Lewis in the mercilessly unflinching world historical civil rights biopic *The Theory of Redmayne*, co-starring tragic *Facenet* founder Julianne Moore as Cate Blanchett, flawed visionary AIDS activist Sean Penn, and '40s single mom Dame Helen Mirren as herself, if she had a stammer. (Which she doesn't. Because the awards are for ACTING.) So, who's going to win what this year? Using the newly patented Esquire Oscar Bait Algorithm, we weigh up the assets of the likely contenders.

Who demonstrates courage and integrity under appalling conditions?	While suffering a debilitating illness?	Evidence of visionary genius?	Meryl / Cate / Julianne?	Best line from the trailer
Not 'arf.	Death by horse.	Did we mention Meryl Streep's in it?	Meryl and Helena Bonham Carter.	"Shut yer bleedin' cake 'ole!"
On second thoughts, this isn't going to win any Oscars, is it?	One of them was a psychopath. The other didn't have that excuse.	What did you say, you slag?	Not even Anne-Marie Duff.	"Me and my bruvver, we're gonna rule Lahndan."
Serves 11 months in prison rather than rat out his pals.	Communism.	If you include writing the script for Roman Holiday (and we do), then certainly.	Mirren.	"He's a genius!"
His colleagues, up against that monstrous ego, would tell you that they did.	Jobs died of cancer, aged 56.	We'd prefer a Genius Bar appointment.	Even better: Winslet.	"The most tectonic shift in the status quo since... ever!"
Undergoes world's first sex change op with '20s medical technology.	No, but certainly with emotional and physical issues beyond what most of us could conceive.	Clever wig.	Isn't Eddie enough? Plus foxy newcomer Alicia Vikander as Mrs Lily.	"You're different from most girls."
Just a bit. Secret same-sex affair in '50s America = tricky.	No, although all that smoking can't have been healthy.	Only in the costume department.	Cate!	"She's still my wife! And I love her!"
Spielberg: "Today it'd be a lot harder to find a man that would stand up for his principles."	Cold War paranoia.	*Jaws, ET, Jurassic Park*.	Hanks.	"The next mistake our governments make could be the last one."
Bears. Cold. Mauling.	Is being mauled by a bear debilitating? You bet your ass it is.	Choosing fur-trapping as a career must be low on any list of bright-spark moments.	Only one woman in the cast: Grace Dove Syme, Canadian aboriginal actress, playing Mrs Leo.	"I ain't afraid to die—I done it already."
These journos are admirably tenacious.	Sickness among the clergy and church hierarchy.	This one's about perspiration, not inspiration.	Rachel McAdams, whose name anagrams from their full names. Apart from the 'd'.	"I know there's things you cannot tell me, but I also know there's a story here."
No.	No.	You decide.	Michael, Kurt, Jennifer (Madsen, Russell, Jason-Leigh).	"Woo-hoo! Now we're talking!"


6


7


8


9


10



MaHB / Music **by Zack Yusof**

BABY, IT'S YOU

Make the right love connection and you could very well find yourself with a licence to print money.

THE PERFECT LOVE SONG remains that most attractive and elusive of musical beasts, a beautifully complex puzzle that has the magical ability to captivate and elevate hearts and minds and transcend boundaries like no other type of musical form. Angry songs and protest songs are all well and good, and I have plenty of those types of songs in the collection, but nothing connects with the human spirit or moves people *en masse* quite like a good love song does.

The love song has been around for as long as music has, and it can come in many different guises—beautiful, ugly, weird, you name it. It can also be about different kinds of love as well—a love for an inanimate object or a specific place, for example—all providing for a seemingly endless well of inspiration that has kept bards and poets everywhere scrambling to try and crack its mysterious codes for the last thousand years or so. Because just by pressing the right emotional and sonic buttons in a listener—if you know where they are and how to get to them that is—a delicately simple love song can be transformed into an unforgettable force of nature. A fist in a velvet glove. Seems easy right? Wrong.

True masters of the craft like Burt Bacharach and Hal David or Motown's resident geniuses Norman Whitfield and Barrett Strong ("Walk On By" and "Just My Imagination" remain unrivalled as two titans of the all-time romantic songbook) managed to make the whole process of coming up with a love song that connects with people look like the easiest thing in the world to accomplish. In more modern times, Amy Winehouse managed to raise the bar with her incredibly moving Grammy Award-winning *Back to Black* album which laid her broken heart bare for all to see in spectacular fashion with songs like "Love Is a Losing Game". But the truth is, for the rest of us mere mortals, creating the perfect love song that doesn't rely on old, tired ideas and well-worn clichés is still a devilishly tough nut to crack.

For this writer, the song that really set the standard for all the other love songs to follow and aspire to is still the Brian Wilson, Beach Boys' classic "God Only Knows", a love song of unrivalled beauty so perfect in its creation and execution that it barely seems possible that a wet-behind-the-ears, 23-year-old, emotionally stunted kid could have come up with something so celestial and pure and with such a strong emotional and unpretentious connection to what it really means to be in love. As a contemporary pop love song, Wilson's masterpiece simply towers above the rest of the pack and continues to do so 50 years on.

Humans can't exist without love. Therefore humans can't exist without love songs because humans need love to exist. Love is a universal thing, but ask a hundred songwriters and 90 of them will tell you that one of the hardest things to compose is a good, non-cheesy love song. The other 10 will tell you that love songs are all they write, and then you listen to the songs and they invariably suck. Because they sound cheesy and unoriginal, which is hard to avoid when it comes to love songs. So how do you make your song sound fresh and original when there have been a gazillion similar songs already written out there? Solve that puzzle and you've got a hit on your hands.

freedeserters.com @ZackYusof69



GETTY



MaHB / TV by Sophia Goh

MELODRAMA KILLED THE TV STAR

What this *Empire* needs: less soap opera, more hip-hop.



HAVE YOU WATCHED *EMPIRE* LATELY? Because it's not great anymore. I was a huge fan of the show's first season, and along with many others, was quick to cry foul when it didn't get nominated for a best drama series Emmy. Now, with the second season well underway, I'm wondering if last year might have been its best shot.

I know it seems premature and a bit harsh, but I'm surely not the only one who's noticed that the *Empire* of today is less powerful Lyon and more petty catfight. Somewhere along the line, Luscious Lyon got a little less charismatic, Cookie got a little less interesting, and don't even get me started on those sons of theirs—talented they might be, but they're also starting to get on my nerves. *What is happening?*

The answer: nothing that hasn't happened before. In the same way that so many movie sequels fall flat, it's pretty hard to replicate a second season (let alone a third, a fourth, you get the idea) of TV awesomeness. *Empire*'s first season was refreshing and groundbreaking in many ways, but you can only be groundbreaking once. After that, you're just trying to live up to expectations. And to be fair, expectations for the show were very high.

One of *Empire*'s strengths from its first season was the way it combined soap opera levels of drama with great writing and a solid plot. Unfortunately, when the dial is already turned up that high, it's impossible to take things up a notch without going overboard. The line between sensational drama and unnecessary melodrama is a difficult one to navigate, and if the writers are struggling (and buckling) under the pressure to equal, if not top, last season, who can blame them?

Empire needs to turn things around—and fast. I for one would love to see that happen because I think Lee Daniels and Danny Strong really have something special on their hands. Also, I would like to take this opportunity to publicly appreciate all the long-running TV serials out there, because I've been reminded of how much harder it is to stay successful than it is to get there in the first place.

If it's any consolation, *Empire* is not alone. *Downton Abbey* is a notable example of a wonderful show that took an unfortunate turn for the melodramatic, as is *Nashville*. Last year, I came awfully close to quitting *Suits*, and unless Shonda Rhimes is able to inject a fresh element or three, even *Scandal* is in real danger of overstaying its welcome. All these being a matter of personal opinion, of course.

Unlike your daytime soaps that seem to last forever, a primetime hit TV series can only ride on dramatics for so long before audiences tire of it. And maybe it's just my advancing age and the increasingly hectic schedule that comes with raising a human being, but melodrama for the sake of it just doesn't cut it anymore.

If I'm going to watch a TV drama, it better be a damn good one that makes it worth the time. Otherwise, with so much real-life bad news in the world already, I find myself increasingly drawn to an easy sitcom and a good laugh. *Empire* was definitely one of those shows that made the cut initially, but if I'm to make it through this season (and stick around for a potential third), it's going to take more than just Cookie cutter melodrama. See what I did there?

sophiagoh.com @sophiagoh

EVERETT COLLECTION

MaHB / TV by Paul Schrodt

HOW *VINYL* HAPPENED

There's a new HBO show from Mick Jagger and Martin Scorsese. Somehow, they're not the most interesting thing about it.



Above *Vinyl* stars Bobby Cannavale, Olivia Wilde, and… Wait, is that Ray Romano?

***VINYL* SHOULDN'T WORK.** The HBO series about the '70s music industry (premiering February 14) should be buried under the myth-sized expectations that come with its benefactors. Instead, it's great. It's in lines like "Would you shut the f**k up? I'm trying to apologise!" It's in the camera, eyeing set pieces like a divine observer at a peep show, zooming in on the New York Dolls, Robert Plant's abs, performances that make music videos suddenly seem viable again. The show just moves, like the music that inspired Martin Scorsese when he was a kid. "I've always tried to give the audience what they want, and in return they made me stinking f**king rich," the main character, Richie, says in the pilot. *Vinyl* gives the people what they want and hopes they will return the favour. We talked to the cast and creators about how the show came to be.

MICK JAGGER

Executive Producer

It was a movie idea. I went to Marty and said that I'd like to do something that covers the actual inside of the record business, using *Casino* as shorthand. [The industry] hadn't been portrayed really much at all at that point, but I thought it was interesting the way it worked and the crazy people who worked in it. Walter Yetnikoff used to run CBS, and there was Ahmet [Ertegun], who used to run Atlantic, then much sleazier people who ran smaller labels like Roulette—there were lots and lots of payola types of scandals throughout the whole of the record industry, a lot of shenanigans.

Sometimes I notice anachronisms in the language [of the scripts]: "Iconic." If people say things like that, I say, "Ehhh, I don't think I would have said that in 1973."

Andy [Warhol] liked to commodify himself—that was his goal. Everyone wants to commodify themselves now. But none of the artists [on *Vinyl*] are like me. None of the executives are like me. It's fictional.

MARTIN SCORSESE

Director; Executive Producer

I met Mick for the first time in 1976, and he asked if I would make a film on the rock 'n' roll business. In 2008, I had a phone call late one night with Terry Winter and told him that Mick and I had a project that was this roller-coaster ride through rock 'n' roll history that spanned about 40 years. The idea then became to make it into a series and focus on 1973, around the time punk and hip-hop were born. And it was the year I made *Mean Streets*.

I grew up in the city. We didn't ride around in a car, hearing music coming out of the radio on summer nights. We heard it echoing through the streets.

In the late '70s, the music business was getting big and bloated, and those records by the Clash and the Ramones and the Sex Pistols and Elvis Costello just cut through all that. They laid down a challenge to the older bands, and that includes the Stones—I suppose that *Some Girls* was a response to the challenge of punk. And, of course, it started here in New York with the Dolls. So that's where *Vinyl* starts.

TERENCE WINTER

Showrunner; Executive Producer

[It took] two seconds. We were in Marty's house: me, Marty, Mick and HBO. We said, "We want to do a show set in the '70s about rock 'n' roll." And they said, "Great."

Usually, you use special effects to make things look better. We actually need them to make things look worse. And it's not cheap.

We have pigeons out here, too. You get three pigeons who can act and you get them in, and they just act like pigeons.

ILLUSTRATION BY SEAN MCCABE.

At one point, there was an episode where Bobby [Cannavale] didn't do a lot of coke.... He was like, "It's nice taking a break."

It's sort of a powdered baby laxative. If you're doing one scene and it calls for you to do a line of coke and you do the scene 10 times, that's a lot of baby laxative.

BOBBY CANNAVALE

Actor; plays Richie, head of American Century music

It's not baby laxative! It's milk powder. If it were baby laxative, I'd be s***ting myself all the time.

We'd be shooting on Central Park South and looking out the window, and Marty'd go, "Oh boy, I was just thinking about the time we shot that scene [in *Taxi Driver*] with Bob [De Niro] where he takes the shot at the guy when he's giving the speech." Or he would tell me about, like, going with his friends and finding bodies that were just dumped out of cars into that alley from Jersey Street.

[Bruce Springsteen is] my favourite. I'm from Jersey, man. In, like, episode six, there's a scene at Max's Kansas City where Bruce opens for Bob Marley. Later, another character brings [Bruce] up and I don't act that interested. It was a hard scene for me. It was like doing a scene where I say the Yankees suck or something.

[Richie is from] the template that goes back to the ancient Greeks and to Shakespeare: the fallen king, just trying to do anything he can to hold on to his kingdom.

OLIVIA WILDE

Actor; plays Devon, former member of Warhol's Factory and Richie's wife

I gave birth and was on the set of the pilot four weeks later. You have that confidence that you just produced a human being, and therefore, you're capable of anything. And so I walked onto that set like, "All right, Marty, let's do this."

Devon, as originally written, was not very developed. We were shooting the scene where I find Bobby drunk in the den. The original scene was that I walked in, saw what he was doing, and walked right out. I said, "Bobby, Marty, I'm going to try something a little different," and they said, "Great." So I spat in [Bobby's] face.

There was this silence after cut that felt interminably long. I thought, "Okay, [Marty] either hates this and I'm fired or he likes it." And finally, he said, "Now she's somebody."

That was one of the most gratifying moments of my career.

JUNO TEMPLE

Actor; plays Jamie, A&R assistant at American Century

My dad's [Julien Temple, filmmaker and Sex Pistols collaborator] got a big history with punk music. You know, "the sound of a revolution."

I put myself on tape and tried to look as '70s as possible with what I had in my suitcase. I wore an original Sex Pistols T-shirt that has Minnie and Mickey Mouse, but they're screwing and it has the anarchy symbol.

I kind of wish I'd been a child in 1973.

RAY ROMANO

Actor; plays Zak, partner at American Century

If you saw an [actor] who was a broad character for nine years on a show in your living room every night, seeing him in a dramatic role takes an adjustment. Which is why one of the luckiest things is that when I auditioned for Martin Scorsese, he had never heard of me.

His casting director said, "Listen, Marty likes what he saw, and he's also never heard of him or seen him before." And my agent actually had to ask her as a follow-up question, like, "Do you mean he's never seen the show or he's never seen..." And she said, "He's never heard of or seen Ray."

I don't want to sound incredulous, because that's a little pompous of me to say "How could he have not heard of me?" But we were a little baffled by it.

It's not Ray Barone. It's gritty. I had to do a sex scene, too, so that may turn everybody off. This is my warning: episode seven, just go bowling.

JAMES JAGGER

Actor; plays Kip, lead singer of punk band the Nasty Bits

I'd just started getting back into acting [after touring with my band since 2011] and [my manager] sent me the sides, being like, "It's Marty, Terence, and your dad's thing." And I was like, "Hey, hold on a minute." I had read the script as a film when I was, like, 15 or something.

I had to audition on tape, then I came to New York to audition. And then I had to do what I think was just the d**khead test: I had to go sit down with Marty for a half hour, and if I was a massive knob, then he would've said, "No, I'm not working with that guy."

I really care what people think about my upbringing; I've been Mick Jagger's son more than I've been my own person. I don't really care if someone's a really big Rolling Stones fan and they're being weird toward me. I'm very proud of my dad and his achievements, and if someone wants to take a photo of me 'cause I'm his son, I care. It doesn't make me feel like a genius, but I'm more than happy to play that role.

There are quite a few things in New York [from the '70s] that are still there. You can go into John Varvatos and lick the wall if you want. Might still have a bit of CBGB on it.

MICK JAGGER

Nostalgia is a funny word. That means you wistfully, rather regretfully, wish you were there. And that's not what I think when I think about [the '70s]. I just think about some funny stories.

Another guy worth knowing: George Mastras, a writer for and executive producer of *Vinyl*. He wrote and directed the *Breaking Bad* episode "Dead Freight"—the one with the train and the kid on the dirt bike and the gun.



MaHB / Media Man **by John Lim**

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN

The lad mag is dead, long live the lad mag.

AND SO THE BELL has tolled for *FHM*. Thirty years after it first launched—and 20 after its heyday of the mid-'90s—the figurehead of the lads' mag era called it quits after a long and stubborn decline. That it failed to adapt to digital times is obvious, but more than that, it failed to be culturally relevant to the community it served: the emerging male adult aged 18 to 30.

This isn't my way of absolving the lads' mag from its crass humour revolving beer, boobs and balls. The problem is exactly that: it just never grew up from the '90s and the '00s. Even after numerous revamps, many of its stories still revolved around tales of pulling women, features on sports and gadgets, and topped by girl-next-door interviews asking her what she finds sexy in a man (or woman). Each issue brought me back to a time when Tim Allen was grunting about more power, and Pamela Anderson was happy to hand him a drill in denim shorts.

The demise of the lads' mag, however, doesn't mean that lads are an extinct demographic, or have no need for such a publication. On the contrary, given that the void is now being filled by free porn sites like PornHub, there *needs* to be a formal space, now more than ever, where boys can be boys without being a******s.

And the Internet, as we know, is already full of them.

The unlikely champions ushering lads into the digital era come from Manchester-based 65twenty, which owns several online titles with *The LAD Bible* being its most prominent. Launched in 2011 by Alex Solomou and his friend Arian Kalantari when they were still students, *The LAD Bible* has grown from being a *FHM* online clone, into one of the most visited sites in the UK, with 17 million followers across Facebook, Twitter and Instagram combined.

A big part of its success was becoming what *FHM* refused to do: adapt and grow with its audience, and—this is the unlikely part—taking responsibility to refine the crass misogyny of booze, boobs and balls that dominates lad culture. Part of that responsibility, for instance, involves employing a chief data scientist that analyses content trends, allowing editors to know what the audience wants, and producing the stories that the audience should read or watch.

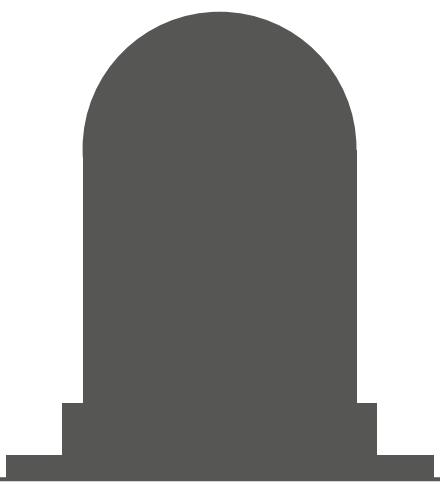
"Maybe because we see that mass of insight, we don't underestimate them," said Marketing Director Mimi Turner, under whom content like "Cleavage Tuesday" and "Bumday Monday" were phased out, in an interview with *The Guardian*. "We don't think they want the lowest common denominator. We try to give them the smartest, cleverest, funniest, best content and user experience."

In November, they hired a content director from *Vice*, who leads a 30-strong editorial team producing content across the sites owned by 65twenty. Already there has been a considerable uptick in conventional news stories; the most-read section was dominated by coverage of the Paris terror attacks.

While *The LAD Bible* is far from being taken seriously as a cultural news site—today's headline story is "These are the Health Benefits of Masturbation"—it has come a long way from when Laura Bates, of *Everyday Sexism*, accused it of spreading "a culture of misogyny sickeningly disguised as 'banter'". That was in 2012, and in that short time, *The LAD Bible* has decided to do what lads' mags didn't—man up and take on a leading role in shaping male culture in the 21st century.

These lads, you feel, are going to be all right after all.

@johnlim



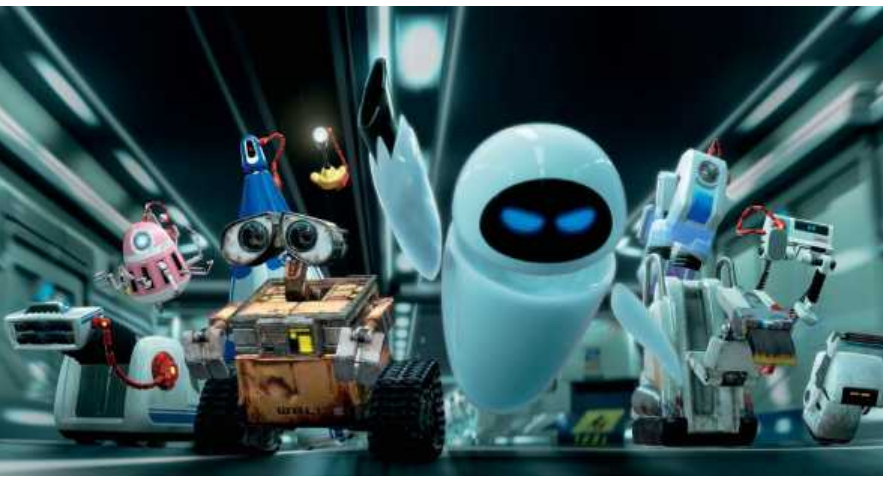
EVERETT COLLECTION



MaHB / Digital Man by Matt Armitage

TECHNOCALYPSE NOW

Are humans about to become optional?



I WOKE UP THIS MORNING with a startling vision of my future. I was sitting outside a convenience store wearing soiled military fatigues and holding up a sign that read: "Will write for food. Birthday cards, anniversary greetings, dirty limericks a speciality." Robots and drones swarmed within a hair's breadth of my miserable figure as the super rich slithered by, silently, in their driverless electric cars.

The professional classes have long thought themselves immune to the sweeping technocalypse of innovation, one that has brought an efficient destruction to much of the industrialised world's working class. Technology has made workplaces safer—that's indisputable. But it is also making humans essentially irrelevant. Many manufacturing plants now contain little more than a handful of overseers; highly qualified technicians and engineers, and a fleet of robots. Plus, the odd *murder** of marketing managers and accountants.

I'm certainly not advocating a return to the smelting hell of 19th century factories, where workers breathed in a toxic *mélange* of poisons. But why regress for progress? It's like a cyber update of the philosophical argument about the tree falling in the forest: what is a worker when there is no work?

Though this whittling of the workforce is happening across the spectrum, tech start-ups have made anti-humanity a mantra. With their "lean-and-mean" ethos, companies like Twitter and WhatsApp were able to reach billion-dollar market valuations with relatively few staff. At its 2013 IPO, Twitter was valued at USD31 billion. Today, the company employs around 3,000 people. Compare this to century-old chemical giant Dow, a colossus with a market value of USD50 billion and a staff of over 50,000.

Ride-share service Uber is commendably and ruthlessly open about the fact that the driver is the most expensive component of an Uber trip, a problem that driverless cars could solve, admirably. Despite this, there has been a rush the world over to drive for the company. As jobs and incomes shrivel in traditional industries, we ignore the irony in a rush to prop up our mortgages and living standards.

Like Tolkien's Rohirrim at Helm's Deep, the battle has finally come to the professional classes. Automated services can take care of much of the grunt work of accounting and law. In medicine and architecture, machines cut out the weakest link: us. Machines don't get tired or make the wrong calculations. They have steady hands for surgery. Software doesn't get depressed and fly airplanes into mountains.

Worst of all, it seems they can replace me, too. A lot of news and business reports on wire services are already automated. Software can write poetry and puns. Unlike me, it can be as neutral or as biased as its programming requires.

I'm hoping that by this point you've spotted the enormous flaw in this logic. The capitalist system functions mainly by making stuff to sell to people. In order to buy that stuff, people need jobs. In order to run countries, governments take taxes. From the people with jobs. When no one has a job, this system breaks down. There might be enough hedge fund managers and techno-CEOs to keep the makers of super yachts and private jets ticking over, but most of the world's really big companies do things that are far more mundane, like feeding people.

I can't imagine the likes of Nestlé being thrilled with the idea of selling gold-plated cornflakes to a few million billionaires, as hundreds of millions of potential customers scratch in the dirt for food with robot chickens. And I certainly can't imagine the world transforming into a socialist utopia, a future of unlimited leisure time where machines and corporations provide for all our needs at no cost.

Some economists think that future me is going to have to embrace the share economy to make ends meet. I'll be joining a world of computer-linked day labourers, competing to work for the lowest bid. My bedroom will be up for grabs on Airbnb and I'll be giving Amazon storage space under the kitchen sink. Sitting outside the convenience store will be for slow days.

All of this ignores the simple fact that people in secure, long-term jobs spend more than those in uncertain, short-term positions. It's a problem that someone other than me is going to have to solve. Pretty darn fast. There are seven billion people on the planet. We can't all be marketing managers.

@kulturpopup

**Collective term for middle management.*

EVERETT COLLECTION



MaHB / Drinking **by Ben Ng**

BAR NONE

Fancy yourself the owner of your own humble drinking establishment, eh? Well, here's what it takes to be heads and shoulders above the scrum.



WITH SO MANY F&B establishments popping up all over Malaysia, it's not surprising that a good number of them are bars. From trendy *izakayas* to specialist wine bars and speakeasies, we are seeing more establishments being owned and operated by those with no previous experience in the drinks business. So is it really that easy to open and operate a bar? Well, here are a few things that you might want to consider if you have a dream bar in mind.

I love to drink

There are many individuals out there who seem to enjoy their drink, and some might have the idea of opening a bar with a bunch of their drinking buddies. Brilliant you may think, since it'll allow you to make some money while celebrating your love for alcohol. If that's what you have in mind, think again, as drinking for pleasure and for work are two completely different things. Furthermore, having a bunch of drinking buddies as business partners might go south pretty quickly. Lastly, if you have a lack of self-control when it comes to watching your drink, you probably shouldn't be a bar owner.

Sleep deprivation

Oh yes! It may sound extreme, but the lack of sleep would be par for the course if you're thinking of becoming a bar owner. You are required to function and continue to do more with very little rest, especially during the infancy of your business. Spearheading a bar is somewhat a baptism of fire when it comes to the sleep department. Working long and ungodly hours certainly require a good amount of mental strength and patience.

Passion

You really need to have a strong passion for this business. You'll need that to create an identity for your bar. A significant amount of passion for and interest in your business will allow you to drive it with better direction. Knowing that this is something of pure interest beyond a business makes more sense of the blood and sweat that you're going to put in to build it.

People person

Obviously, owning a bar will require you to be a people person. That doesn't just mean that you'll be meeting people for drinks and banter; you will very likely be encountering the worst of characters. It's more about developing the ability to learn and deal with people rather than just meeting them when they are on their best behaviour. It can be mentally draining when you're out there trying to please various demands to meet service standards.

Owning your own bar might very well be the most challenging business that you will undertake in Malaysia, but it can also be an interesting business experience that opens up various avenues of opportunity. You never know who's going to walk through those doors.

@Ben_Ng

GETTY



MaHB / Food **by Fay Khoo**

DIRTY LITTLE SECRETS

Turns out you may be paying top dollar for lowbrow ingredients in your highbrow food.



HERE'S A NEWSFLASH you won't forget in a hurry: highbrow chefs frequently use lowbrow ingredients in the food they serve at their restaurants (which begs, in turn, the question why we pay *haute* prices for their food, but that's a fight we'll leave for another day). Incredulous you may be, but it's true.

At his now defunct New York eatery called 66, Jean-Georges Vongerichten offers a shrimp starter that's cloaked in a sauce made primarily from Hellmann's mayonnaise and condensed milk. Perhaps it's a throwback to his Asian training, but Vongerichten also touts soy and oyster sauce as being instrumental to good food. He's not alone. David Bouley of Bouley and Danube uses a base of Heinz ketchup for his Hawaiian yellowtail appetiser (price: USD21), while Paul Kahan of Chicago's Blackbird restaurant crushes Snyder's of Hanover salt and vinegar potato chips into his salt and vinegar walleyed pike dish.

Erstwhile the dirty little secret of top chefs, the use of supermarket products in five-star restaurants is now becoming less taboo thanks in no small part to Ferran Adrià and Heston Blumenthal, whose molecular gastronomy encompasses the widespread use of industrial ingredients.

There is also the more than sneaking suspicion that chefs are rebelling against the whole small-batch, artisanal, organic movement that's consumed the industry in recent years. When everyone else is obsessed with culinary mastery, there's a lot to be said for winning the satisfaction stakes because, when push comes to shove, taste is paramount. And that's why, should you ever enter a restaurant kitchen, the likelihood of finding ketchup, mayonnaise and even soft drinks as part of the *mise-en-place* is exceedingly high.

Home cooks will readily attest that said ingredients have long been deployed because they are highly efficacious flavour enhancers. A splash of Heinz ketchup adds depth and vivacity to bolognese sauce thanks to the sugar and vinegar, Coca-Cola imbued barbecue sauces and braises with a more complex sweetness than sugar, while any Chinese homemaker will tell you that oyster sauce is truly mother's indispensable little helper.

Marco Moreira of Tocqueville uses Gravy Master as a starter for his USD75 Kobe dish sauce and all dishes that require marinating because he says it facilitates caramelisation of the meat. More scandalously, he says he picked up these short cuts when apprenticing in Michelin-starred French restaurants, where French chefs—for all their *haute* cuisine ostentations—purportedly use everything from MSG to ketchup to enliven their food.

So, for all the collective vitriol that's been heaped upon Chinese restaurateurs for their prodigious use of MSG all these years, it would appear that five-star establishments haven't exactly been swimming between the flags either, except—unlike their Asian counterparts—they've kept their dirty little secrets, well, secret. Vongerichten used to even spike his truffle sauce with MSG, saying, "I love MSG... because it's so tasty", but only stopped, reluctantly, because of public disapprobation of the stuff. Well, well, well. Who would've thought?

@misskhoo

GETTY

MaHB / Food by Russell Norman

MAGNIFICENT MEAT-FREE MORSELS

Throw a healthy banquet with a ballsy Italian vegetarian centrepiece.



PHOTOGRAPHY BY SCOTT GRUMMETT.

Opposite If you can't beat 'em, join 'em—Norman goes veggie with his spinach and ricotta *malfatti*.

KINGSLEY AMIS famously declared that the most depressing three words in the English language are "red or white?" That's all very well when you're at the dinner table being plied with wine. When you're in the kitchen about to serve supper, the most depressing three words in the English language are "I'm a vegetarian"—especially if you've been marinating beef cheeks for two days and they're now braising nicely in the oven, thank you very much.

Now look, I've got nothing against vegetarians. Lovely people. I even tried quinoa myself once. But when you're cooking at home, discovering that one of your guests only eats mung beans can be a right royal pain in the rump steak. There was a time when they could be palmed off with an emergency plate of pasta and pesto. Not any more. The vegetarians are revolting. They will no longer lie back and let you tickle their tummies with chives. They want restaurant-quality food prepared with the same care and attention as the fancy stuff you're serving the carnivores.

I have even seen my otherwise mild-mannered herbivore chums get apoplectic with rage in restaurants if the vegetarian option is too predictable. (Apparently, there is nothing that makes a vegetarian see red quite like "something-something goat's cheese" or "something-something beetroot" on a menu. I mean, talk about ungrateful, right?)

Of course, you might argue that vegetarians have the moral upper hand at the moment. With more and more health scares concerning flesh (mad cow disease, the horsemeat pies scandal) and its consumption (heart disease, bowel cancer), now is a very good time to cut down on the cutlets and beef up on the beans.

If vegetarians aren't quite having the last laugh, they are certainly enjoying the penultimate chuckle. And with your New Year health kick wavering, this might be an opportune occasion to start eating less meat. But let's get back to that dinner party. How are you going to keep the persistent vegetarian happy? Well, my suggestion is to go hardcore. Play them at their own game. Make the whole meal a veggie feast. Huge bowls of hearty salads. Tasty beans and pulses. Classic *mirepoix* lentils. And, as a centrepiece, this deceptively simple home-made *malfatti* (dumplings) recipe that has deep *umami* flavours and plenty of theatricality, too. You could even get everyone to help you spin the glasses. After a few bottles of "red or white", what could possibly go wrong?

russellnorman.co @RussellNorman_

Russell's new book *Spuntino: Comfort Food (New York Style)* is out now.











SPINACH AND RICOTTA *MALFATTI*

Serves four

Ingredients

- 520G baby spinach leaves, washed
- 250G ricotta cheese
- 200G grated Parmesan cheese (or rennet-free Twineham Grange)
- 100G butter
- 200G semolina
- 50G "00" flour
- 1 large free-range egg, beaten
- ½ tsp freshly grated nutmeg
- Flaky sea salt
- Ground black pepper
- Handful picked sage leaves

Instructions

1. Steam the spinach for 3MINS, drain the excess water and chop the leaves very roughly. Set aside.
2. Mix the flour and ricotta in a large bowl until it resembles lumpy, moist breadcrumbs. With a wooden spoon, stir in the egg and three-quarters of the Parmesan. Add a good pinch of salt, a decent twist of pepper, the nutmeg, and then the spinach, and combine everything thoroughly.
3. Take a large, stemmed wine glass and drop in a dessertspoonful of semolina. Using a separate, clean dessert spoon, dollop a glob of the ricotta mixture into the glass. Swirl around for a few seconds until you have a walnut-sized dumpling. Lay onto a generously semolina-dusted tray. Repeat until all the mixture is used up. When you have finished, you should have 24 or so little *malfatti*.
4. Fill a large pan with cold water and bring to a hearty boil. Drop in the *malfatti* as quickly as possible, bring back to the boil, and then continue to simmer for about 3MINS. Meanwhile, in a small saucepan over a medium heat, melt the butter and add the sage leaves. When it bubbles, reduce the heat to very low. The *malfatti* will have floated to the surface when they are ready.
5. Turn off the heat, remove the *malfatti* with a slotted spoon and drain away the excess water on a clean tea towel. Evenly distribute onto four warmed plates, pour the butter and sage over the top, and finally, scatter the remaining Parmesan.



MaHB / Sport **by Andrew Whitelaw**

SHOW ME THE MONEY

If you were a millionaire athlete, would you go to town on your paycheck, or wait to find out what's behind door No. 1?



HAVING EMERGED from the merry, blurry haze of the festive season clutching wistful New Year's resolutions and a barren wallet, perhaps the last thing you wish to read is an exploration of the millions of dollars that others are whimsically spending. But there are a few superstars who make it seem so fantastical you can't help but be intrigued. Namely, UFC featherweight champion Conor McGregor.

What's interesting about him, aside from his success as both a talker and a fighter, is his nonchalant attitude towards money. The live gate for his infamous bout with José Aldo back in December yielded a basic fee of USD500,000, not to mention a lively chunk of the pay-per-view total. He responded to such riches by splashing out on a Rolls-Royce Phantom. And this just a few months after hoovering up a BMW i8 and a Mercedes-Benz.

When quizzed about the longevity of such reckless use of coin, McGregor explained how it kept him sharp and was a force for his professional hunger and competitive edge. It's a fascinating mindset to have. Let's imagine for a moment the average Joe walking down the street who would love to be a millionaire athlete...

And while I'm hesitant to presume anything specific about the hypothetical whims of athlete Joe and what he'd do with his newfound wealth, is it safe to presume that once the incredible novelty has set in, he might do something sensible with it? And by that I mean invest a bit? Tuck some away for a rainy day? Start a pension? But then, isn't that exactly the kind of pragmatic, vanilla behaviour that sets people like Conor McGregor apart from us, the masses?

Many famous champions don't do ordinary. Mike Tyson, Diego Maradona and Dennis Rodman are just three examples of fiery characters who flew too close to the sun and got burned financially. Bankruptcy courts, particularly in the US, are awash with former NBA ballers. It's reported that 60 percent of players file for bankruptcy within five years of being out of the league. That's a staggering figure.

But that fast and loose attitude towards money doesn't appear as common in Malaysia. And it's not as though there isn't increasing wealth available. Datuk Lee Chong Wei has a net worth of USD35 million, according to *Forbes*, and yet, by all accounts, he is a level-headed dude who doesn't spend lavishly. Local footballers are better paid than ever, with players like Safee Sali taking home RM120,000 per month before sponsorships. Beyond a flash car and some decent jeans, you don't see many teetering on the cusp of financial meltdown.

None of us can say what we'd do differently because we don't really know until we're in that position. Liverpool legend Robbie Fowler famously invested his earnings in property. He is now a mogul with over 80 houses to his name and one of the richest men in England. Everyone is different, but the ones who seem to live solely in the now, with no mundane thoughts of a rainy day, are a band apart.

McGregor once said, "It's hard to get up and run when you're wearing silk underwear." I can't say I've ever heard that one before. But as the Irishman cruises around Hollywood with his featherweight title in the backseat of his Phantom, it seems a bit rich to criticise.

@ASTJWhitelaw

GETTY

UP, DOWN, OVER AND ROUND

Esquire's personal trainer Harry Jameson maps out the ultimate training circuit.

YOU KNOW THE GUY, the one who bangs on about how he's found a new high-intensity, mega-calorie-burning, miracle-muscle-building exercise class—and it only takes 15 minutes! The truth is, as Esquire's personal trainer explains, "circuit training is not new; it's just been repackaged. Despite it being something of a fitness fad, it's a fantastic way to work out, but you don't need to pay crazy hourly rates in an über-cool gym packed with sweaty, heaving bodies. You can create your own circuit that's tailored to your gym, your goals and your pace."

THE RULES

You must warm up and cool down. Five minutes at a medium pace on the cross-trainer before and after will do fine.

Perform 10–15 reps on each exercise. If you are feeling really exhausted, just push out as many as you can before moving on.

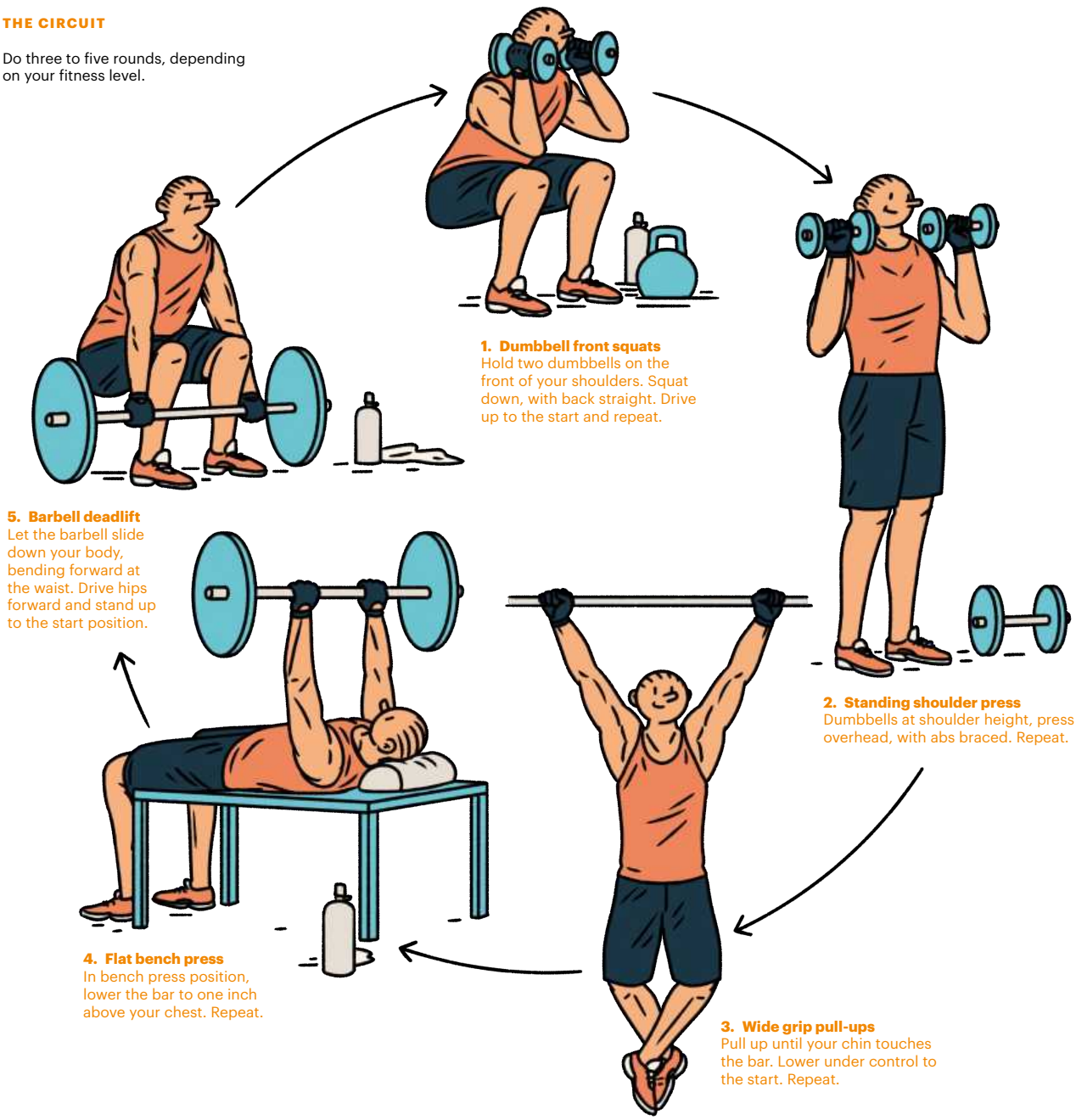
Always strive for a consistent effort. Try and lift at least 70 percent of your capability on each exercise.

After each round of exercises, you must run 1KM on a treadmill at 80 percent of your maximum pace. Then rest for two minutes before repeating the circuit again.

Never continue exercising once your form has gone. That's how you'll accidentally injure yourself.

THE CIRCUIT

Do three to five rounds, depending on your fitness level.



1. Dumbbell front squats
Hold two dumbbells on the front of your shoulders. Squat down, with back straight. Drive up to the start and repeat.

2. Standing shoulder press
Dumbbells at shoulder height, press overhead, with abs braced. Repeat.

3. Wide grip pull-ups
Pull up until your chin touches the bar. Lower under control to the start. Repeat.

4. Flat bench press
In bench press position, lower the bar to one inch above your chest. Repeat.

5. Barbell deadlift
Let the barbell slide down your body, bending forward at the waist. Drive hips forward and stand up to the start position.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY JANNE IIVONEN.



MaHB / Humour **by Kuah Jenhan**

ANIMAL CRACKERS

The day the Chinese zodiac was decided.



IT IS NOISY ROOSTER O'CLOCK. I barely slept a wink. I'm so anxious. The Celestialympic is today! Urgh, no matter how many times I say it's a rubbish name, Jade Emperor insists. I swear the suffix "-lympic" is never going to catch on. Definitely not in sports, at least. Anyway, this is going to be the race of all time! LOL JK, we haven't invented time yet. We're getting to it.

I eat a banana for energy. And noodles, and rice, and grains (organic), just in case. I have a quick power nap to recharge, and when I get up in a super small amount of sun movement (note: we really need to look into this "time" concept soon), champ is gonna rock this.

Damn! It's already Early Bird O'clock? I've overslept! I rush over to the Riverbank, formerly known as The Place With Some Land Near Moving Water. Thankfully, we fixed place names. Pretty much everyone has showed up and Jade Emperor even calls me out during his speech. My tail curls up in shame. It's totally embarrassing and I am glowing pink.

As I get in line to pick up my bib, I watch the others get ready. Water Buffalo is the obvious favourite—he's just so nice to everyone. Cat's helping Rat to stretch. Koala has weird eyes. I think he's doping. I finally register as Tortoise joins the queue. I don't like that guy. Since winning that one race against Rabbit, he's been such an arrogant prick. I'll show him. The day he outruns me is the day I'll fly.

Jade Emperor announces a last-minute decision—to award the Top 12, instead of the usual Top 10. He's also changed the prize from bacon to eternal remembrance (not sure what bacon is, but it sure sounds good, like it makes me want to touch myself kind of good).

J-God calls everyone to the starting line. This is it.

Bang! Water Buffalo powers through with Cat and Rat on his back (he's just too nice). Koala is swinging from branch to branch, Dog's chasing him, and Tiger's chasing them (clueless out-of-style printed cat). Goat, Rooster and Monkey run in the opposite direction towards the trees, like the lost causes that they are. Apparently, they're going to fashion some raft. This is a river race, not *Survivor*, dumb animals! Meanwhile, I'm just gonna start slow and pace myself. Huff, puff, huff, puff.

I pass Horse, sulking. Snake pretends to be his hoof and just leaves him. "Croc shoes, man? What are you? A pantomime villain?" I mockingly say to Horse. I smack him and he darts away. Poor fool's just gonna tire himself out like the rest of them. Nuh-uh, not sharing my running tips. I'm so well paced that I'm stopping for sustenance and another power nap. Pacing is Winning 101. Huff, puff, huff... Zzzz.

Damn! It's Noisy Cricket O'clock. I've overslept again! I finally arrive at the finish line in the dark. I hate myself. I should be a derogatory term.

Seeing Water Buffalo in tears on my way to the buffet line, I ask, "What's wrong? Didn't you win?" "No. Me help Rat and Cat. Rat push Cat in water. Nine time me save Cat. Ten time Cat no life. Me sad. Rat first place," he replies in much moon movement. Dude has a heart the size of brains, and brains the size of a heart. I give him a big hug and a small kiss as consolation, and he exclaims, "Big hug, small kiss! Me like! Me use it as name now. Me Ox now!" I nod along, missing the joke.

"Congratulations, you 12 place!" he continues. *What? I made it?* Turns out, I was right all along. That dirty Koala was doping, so he's out. Tortoise is still queuing at the—by now—closed registration counter (stupid alive stone). Twelfth place is dope though! It's like getting first and second place simultaneously. I go home a champ. One day, I'll be remembered every Chinese New Year, when calling someone a "China Pig" will be the best compliment, ever. Just you watch!

@kuahjenhan

GETTY



MaHB / Sex by Joanne Kam

LOVE FOOL

Our columnist puzzles over the palaver that is Valentine's Day.



IF YOU ARE ATTACHED, February 14 is probably a date that is permanently etched in your consciousness whether you buy into the hype surrounding Valentine's Day or not.

I know countless men who dread this day like root canal surgery. While they realise that it is a purely commercial exercise dreamt up by overzealous ad men, they are also painfully aware of the fact that it is the yardstick by which their love is measured. Unfortunately, this shameless need to harp on about a designated day for romance sees men scratching both head and wallet as they helplessly watch prices for everything from roses and chocolates to dining out in a decent restaurant skyrocket overnight.

As a woman who firmly believes in romance, I feel that Valentine's Day makes a mockery of what love is, because it gives some men the impression that lavish spending correlates highly with how they feel about a woman—and that the other 364 days in the year don't matter.

Personally, love is priceless, with the only true cost being sincerity and commitment. I also like to think of it as a kaleidoscope of affections. When we journey along life's yellow brick road, we sometimes encounter characters along the way that make us question our sanity and tug at our heartstrings.

I recently bumped into a former lover at a club. After complimenting me on my weight loss and "how f**king hot" (his words, not mine) I looked, we sat down for a chat. We were mid-conversation when he suddenly blurted out, "You do know that I've always loved you, right?" to which I replied, "Erm, you do know that you're engaged to be married, right?"

Guy: "Yes, but I love you still..."

Me: "Wonderful. Does your fiancée know about this?"

Guy: "Yes, she does."

Now this is just one tip of many icebergs that dot my pool of failed relationships, which, come to think of it, looks a lot like the body of water where the Titanic sank.

In fact, when I look back, I realise that some of my past relationships are a train wreck of emotions worthy of the Celine Dion song "My Heart Will Go On," as cliché as it may sound. Love is such an enormous, complex emotion with so many facets that giving your heart to only one person may not be what is best for it holistically. I'm not one to condone affairs, but having been "the other woman" before, I humbly admit that the quote, "We don't choose the one we love" does ring true at times.

Further, while there may never be a place for them in everyday society, it is unfortunate that less conventional approaches to love are often overlooked or ignored, simply because they are considered non-conformist.

But whichever side of the fence you're on, no one needs an artificially constructed occasion like Valentine's Day to remind us of our worth; knowing that our hearts understand our choices best should be more than enough.

@joannekam

EVERETT COLLECTION



HOW I STOPPED DREADING CNY AND EMBRACED MY HERITAGE

Words by Loke Poh Lin

WHAT IS IT ABOUT CHINESE NEW YEAR that makes you cringe? Or frown? Or book an air ticket for anywhere but your hometown? Is it the long journey or the thought of spending two days in the balmy heat at your parents' house in the company of nosy relatives?

On the other hand, what brings a smile to your face when you think of CNY? Mum cooking your favourite dishes? Getting an *ang pow* despite your age? Or is it the opportunity to be a child again, binge on cookies, *kuih bakul* and prawn crackers, and feel ill soon after?

GETTY

For many Malaysians, the traditions of the Lunar New Year are fading away with each passing year. Before long, we will find that the whole experience of celebrating new beginnings and the arrival of spring will have disintegrated completely. This rich tapestry of history and culture will have crumbled, until all that we're left with are red plastic lanterns and the recorded sound of firecrackers in this age of sanitary convenience and instant gratification.

Let's start with the reunion dinner—held on the eve of the Lunar New Year when the family gathers together in the ancestral home and eats a sumptuous dinner prepared by the mother of the family. It is a time of bonding and renewing family ties: for siblings to catch up and new cousins to be introduced to each other.

This particular dinner was considered an integral part of the lead-up to the first day of Chinese New Year. After dinner, there's the countdown to the New Year where preparations are made at the family altar and the gods are welcomed at the hour designated by the Chinese almanac. (Which pragmatic Chinese in his or her right mind would not consider this essential?)

The reality is not everyone makes it home for this dinner—workers in retail and F&B, or those who are unable to get transportation home due to the annual exodus, or those who, for reasons best known to themselves, find the flimsiest of excuses not to return home for this all-significant dinner and usher in the Lunar New Year.

And for those who do return home, it has become common to opt for the dinner to be held at a restaurant. Bookings on this date are so packed that some venues have two or even three seatings to meet demand.

And so, year after year, the practices and the traditions get whittled away until they bear no resemblance to the way the occasion was celebrated when we were children. All the anticipation and the excitement of the Lunar New Year's arrival have been watered down. And indeed, all the significance of various festive dishes are sadly forgotten or ignored.

No matter how daunting it may seem, celebrating CNY can be a lot of fun. And the abundance of provenance behind the rituals is quite fun to refer to, to add meaning to this most auspicious of Chinese festivals.

In our family, I have continued with the practice of giving our offspring lucky red packets (*lai see*) to put under their pillows so that they wake up with luck on their side in the new year. I learnt it from my grandmother and I hope my daughters will continue with this charming ritual with their children.

A little planning can go a long way to ensuring a stress-free reunion dinner for the whole family. Start booking tickets and hotel accommodation six months ahead of time for those who are heading home from different cities or countries. Share family traditions and stories with the companions that you will be bringing with you to the dinner—spouses, children, partners, friends—so that they feel part of the festival. Plan work so that you have your bases covered and take more time off in order not to rush through the holiday.

Rather than grouse about the heat, consider installing air conditioners in the living and dining rooms for your parents. Compile booklets or files on the various ceremonies of the Lunar New Year, starting with the winter solstice (*dongzhi*) all the way to the 15th day when Hokkiens stage Chap Goh Meh festivities and build up an album of the family celebrating CNY though the years.

If you have young children, make it educational for them to relate to this festival as a celebration of one of the world's oldest cultures, one full of historical and religious significance. You might learn a few new facts along the way! You could start by compiling a whole chapter on auspicious wishes, quite handy for the *yee sang* (raw fish) tossing ceremony. Share with them what *gong xi fa cai* means, followed by *wanshi ruyi*, *shenti jiankang*, *daji dali* and more.

Even if you're a vehement non-traditionalist, it makes good sense that a houseful of human beings should learn to get along harmoniously before we can talk about world peace. And that is the crux on which CNY spins—achieving harmony and equilibrium between seemingly opposing elements: new and old, youth and age, yin and yang, spiritual and material.

Some whine that CNY is full of superstitions that are tedious to follow, but look at it this way—they are all based on common sense, so just appreciate them as good advice. Some examples are:

- Debts must be settled before the last day of the old year—makes sense to start the year in the black.
- The rice bin must be kept full throughout the festive season—makes sense since a lot of cooking is done during the 15 days.
- When feasting, care should be taken with all utensils i.e. zero breakage—makes sense as one is supposed to start the year with new crockery.

This year, let us strengthen the bonds between family and friends, setting aside differences (temporarily, at least!) and start a brand new year with positivity. Here's to welcoming the Year of the Monkey with an open heart!

WHAT I'VE LEARNED | Interviewed by Noor Amylia Hilda | Photographed by Shivraj Gohil/Current E

Bruno Senna

Team Mahindra Formula E driver, 32

You always want to win more races and be further up, but a racing career is a complex thing. It's almost like a living thing and rarely depends only on you. Motor racing is the biggest team sport in the world. As much as you're making an effort, sometimes things don't go your way. But I think, considering how late I started my career, it's not going too badly.

The best advice that I've been given was by my uncle (Aryton Senna)—which is to do unto others as you would have them do unto you.

My first memory of racing was watching Ayrton race back in the '80s. I think the first race I remember was when he was in one of his black Lotuses. I don't remember the Toleman year in 1984 because I was only one then, but I remember some of the black Lotus years, and then, of course, the McLaren years. I went twice to his races in Brazil at Interlagos and it was crazy for a little kid like me.

In the beginning, it's really difficult [to live up to expectations] because you don't really know how to cope with the pressure and so on, but then you realise the pressure is always in your mind. People can say whatever they want, but if you have your own mind and do the right things, then the pressure doesn't matter. It's only your own pressure that you place on yourself that matters. Unfortunately, it took me a while to learn that.

Brazilian fans are still in need of a really successful Formula One driver. A lot of my fans ask me if I'm going back to F1 anytime soon and it's hard to tell them that I'm not interested. I'm actually interested in what's coming next, but people are still really keen on the Senna name being back in Formula One, but I'm keen on the Senna name winning races every time.

It's probably surprising for most people that I'm the type of guy who prefers to stay home on a Friday night rather than go out and party like most race car drivers will. I enjoy just chilling out and being on my own.

Formula E represents the future, not just in motor racing, but also for road cars. We all need to go into cleaner technology and find a way to make our planet survive in the future. I know that batteries aren't necessarily the way, but electric cars are definitely. Many people say that Formula E is second to Formula One. It's a pretty tough race. There are lots of very competitive drivers and teams, and I think that's what makes Formula E better.

It's hard to say where exactly Formula E is heading. For sure, we attract more young people than F1, which attracts more hardcore race fans. But people who follow Formula E don't care so much about the car noise. As they say, we're the "silent revolution". I don't mind the lack of sound; it's quite peaceful on the racetrack. I was in Mexico for the F1 race recently, and it was busy and noisy. As much as it's a great ambience with the fans and in the paddock where everything is really loud, I kinda missed Formula E and its peacefulness.

Mahindra is improving as a team; we had a lot of ups and downs last year. We started very strong but had a dip in performance. With all the changes that have been made, I think we're looking stronger this year.

I am a proper geek. I enjoy my electronics and computers, and I like flying little racing quadcopters. They're great fun. It's my latest passion, a thing that's really growing on me. My constant travelling doesn't really help. I wish I could take them everywhere with me.

Quadcopters are so immersive. When you've got your goggles on, it feels like you're inside [the cockpit] but there are two sides [to it]. You build your own thing, which you optimise and tweak. You're always making it better, which is similar to what we do in racing. Then you're always working on your skill, precision and confidence; the more you practice, the better you get. Sometimes, you pull off some tricks and you think, "Oh wow, how did I do that?" And when you crash, you have to know how to fix it. It's just like racing, and I think that it shows.

I've found out so much about life from being in racing that it's hard to say what it is that I would be doing now if I weren't a race car driver.

I've learned a lot. In this world—not only in racing—you always have to keep your guard up, try to be clever about the way you look at things and seek out the next opportunity because some things disappear very fast.

The best quality a man should have is humility, because when you're humble, you recognise others and the importance of things. I think this is a good way to start respecting others and being good, not only to yourself, but also others.


Mahindra
RACING
sparco
AVIS
silkflex
IHG

WHAT I'VE LEARNED | Interviewed by Ben Mitchell | Photographed by Tom van Schelven

Harvey Keitel

Actor, 76

I'm not a good dancer but my wife thinks I am, sometimes. I went to a dance class when I began acting. I laughed so hard I could hardly stand up because I felt like such an idiot.

Once you've weathered the storm, you can do it again. That doesn't mean it doesn't come with fear and doubt and all the phenomenal emotions we have, but you must maintain that effort. You have to be prepared to suffer.

I grew up in Brooklyn, New York. I had a little pigeon coop when I was young and I'd steal pigeons from other people's coops. My father made hats. My mother worked in a luncheonette. I got myself thrown out of high school at 16 and they were upset about that.

True friendship, where you can rely on the person and they can rely on you, is a powerful force. I place the highest value on that.

The discipline of therapy helped me to get along with myself. That was a long time ago. As Rihanna sings so beautifully, I get along with the voices inside of my head.

Do I still feel physically strong? Yes. You want me to knock your teeth out to prove it? I eat properly, I exercise, and I don't abuse anything. I take care of myself.

If someone hadn't seen one of my films where should they start? I never thought of that. I can't even think about it now. I'm not being coy with you. I might say read a good book instead. *Adam, Eve, and the Serpent* by Elaine Pagels is a favourite of mine.

What pisses me off is talking behind my back, which covers a lot of ground.

There's always room for improvement. Everywhere. I mean, not in terms of my being an honest person, or a loyal person, or being compassionate and tolerant. There's no place I need to go there; that has not changed in years and it will not change. I could be more patient.

When I was a little boy, I had a stutter. I still stutter, but much less. Back then, it was a real champion stutter. In time, it faded away, for the most part. Now it seems to be returning a little bit. Maybe because I'm so fatigued. I don't mean just now, but in these years.

Getting old is a pleasure. You're not dead. What do I think happens after we die? No problem. If you understand that answer, then you explain it to me.

Fatherhood let me know I was ready for it. I didn't know until that moment. I tell everyone they should have children. It's never too late.

Was cocaine ever my cup of tea? I won't discuss that. I won't discuss it because it's not something to be asked in a question-and-answer period like we're having now. That's a serious subject and should be discussed in a serious way with serious-minded people in a serious environment. Whether it's cocaine, marijuana, alcohol or whatever other drugs are out today, it's serious. Very serious.

The characters that I play have a terrible habit of following me around.

If I say that I'm an optimist, I might seem like a fool. If I say I'm not, then I'll seem like a cynic. Perhaps I'm both.

I joined the Marines when I turned 17. They created an identity in me. I felt like I could meet a challenge and could endure until I completed the action. It gave me a sense of helping other people and camaraderie. A sense of pride. I spent three years in the Marines. I left because I missed my mother. Really. I was homesick.

Of course, it's ridiculous to have regrets. My only regret would be if I was not aware of the regret itself. That would be a real regret.

The human race can be ridiculous about religion. That idea that my religion has the connection to God and your religion does not seems absurd. I remember feeling that way growing up, that my religion was special and every other religion was not. Having grown up, I know what I know and I pursue a path of wanting to be aware, wanting to know what I don't know, but sense is there. I can say that there is only one divine and that is the divine. I grew up Jewish. Now my religion is to do what is right.

It could be that I'm glorifying it because it's past, but the '70s seemed to be a great time. Now things seem more degraded to me than they were back then. I mean, there was debauchery and degradation, if you will, back then, but there was also the spirit of Woodstock and of not finding the right girl but becoming the right person.

An actor doesn't make himself cry or laugh. An actor is never nude in a scene. Never any of those things. An actor plays a scene in the best way he knows how, in the most profound way he can summon up the meaning of that event. Whatever comes out is in the service of bringing a moment of truth to the stage.

No one else can review me as severely as I review myself.

During night combat training in the Marine Corps, we were out in a field. It was very dark. You could not see your hand before your face. There were a couple of hundred of us, just finished boot camp on Parris Island [South Carolina]. I was frightened. Suddenly this voice boomed: "You're all afraid of the dark." I was stunned. In the distance, there was a Marine instructor standing on a platform, silhouetted by the moon. I thought to myself, "How the hell does he know I'm scared? He can't even see me!" I was embarrassed that he saw my fear. Then he said, "We're going to teach you how to live in the darkness, so you're no longer afraid of it."

I don't think about retiring. I will be retired at the proper time.

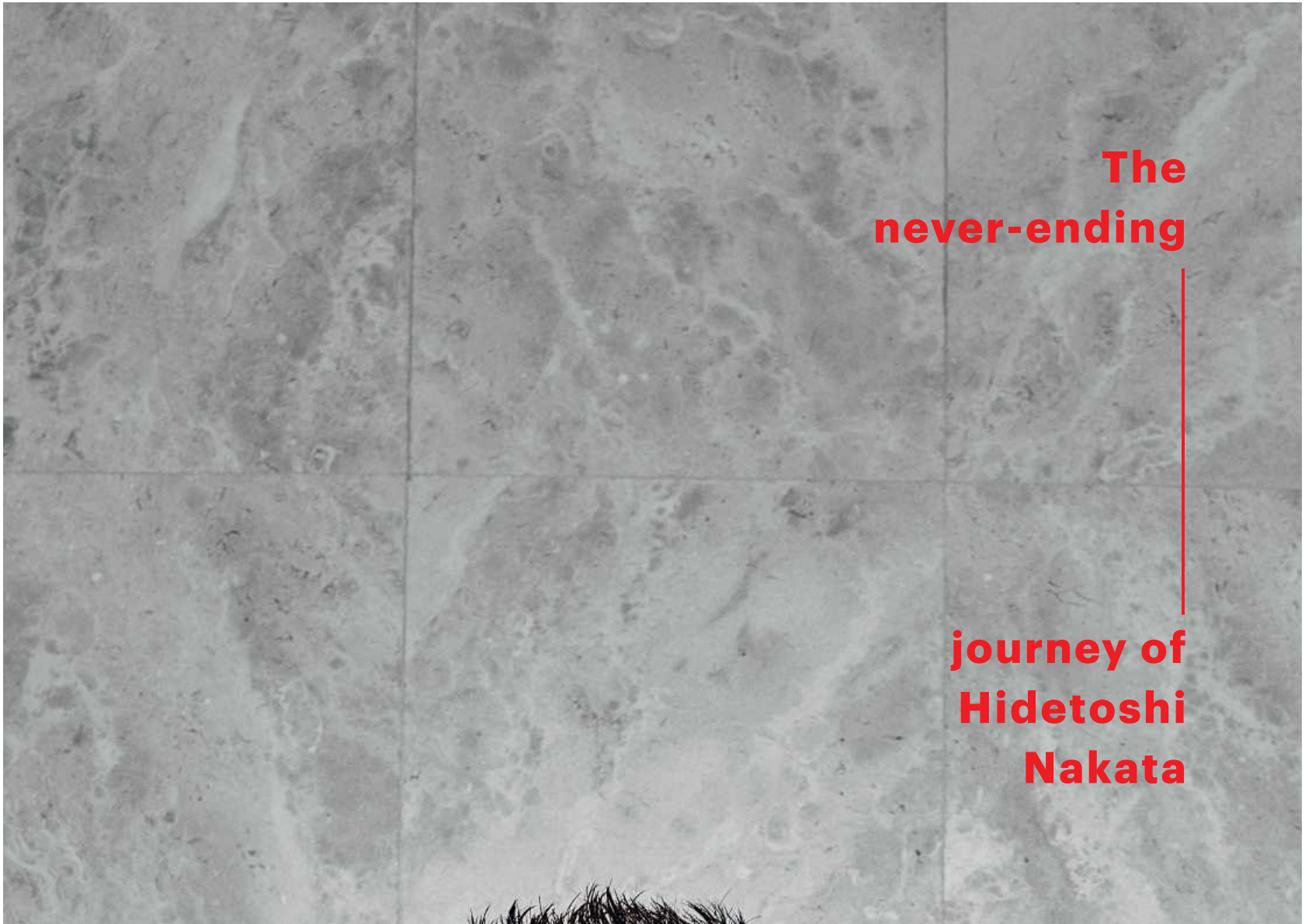
HARVEY KEITEL, PHOTOGRAPHED IN LONDON, OCTOBER 2015.



Words by Sim Wie Boon
Photography by Chuan Looi
Styling by Ian Loh
Art direction by Rebecca Chew

A prodigy on the pitch, Hidetoshi Nakata is considered one of the best Japanese footballers of all time. Having played for AS Roma, led Japan in three FIFA World Cup championships and been made a Knight of the Order of the Star of Italian Solidarity—one of his adopted country's highest honours—Nakata is what you would call a superlative athlete. But after a 10-year career that included seven seasons in the Italian Serie A and a season in the English Premier League, Nakata called it quits and retired from professional football at the relatively tender age of 29 to begin a journey of reinvention and soul searching.

The never-ending journey of Hidetoshi Nakata



TOP BY BALLY; BLACK GOLD AND DIAMONDS BRACELETS BOTH BY DAMIANI.



So what does one do when one retires from being a footballer, that was selected by the legendary Pelé to be in his FIFA 100 list? Well, if you are Hidetoshi Nakata, you decide to travel. As to where, he didn't really know at first, but it was something that he felt compelled to do. Along the way, the once discerningly intense and technical athlete has reinvented himself as an ambassador of the crafts for Japan.

"When I had just retired, I travelled around the world trying to figure out what was out there for me to do next, or rather what I wanted to do next. During the course of my travels, I began to realise that people often asked me about my home country," he recalls.

But the only trouble was, at the time, he didn't know much about Japan. An understandable predicament really, for a man who left his home country in his early twenties to pursue an illustrious football career in Italy, where he joined AC Perugia and chalked up a personal record of 10 goals in his first season. He then went on to Roma where he helped the team win the Italian championship before moving on to other renowned Italian teams like Parma, Bologna and Fiorentina, and eventually, ending up in the English Premier League with the Bolton Wanderers.

"I decided that I wanted to be an authority on Japan so I started travelling around the country learning everything that I could. So for the last six years, I've been to 47 prefectures from Okinawa to Hokkaido by car and met various artisans, such as craftsmen, garment makers, farmers and *saké* makers. I've also visited many shrines, temples and historical spots," he shares.

Over time, Nakata's passion for his travels grew and he found himself drawn to the mastery of Japanese craftsmen, farmers, *saké* makers and the like. He also noticed that all his friends who are involved in design or handicrafts hold Japanese artisans in high regard. He adds, "I thought to myself maybe there is something that I can explore in relation to this. That's when I noticed a problem: there is no bridge between the artisans and the market."

Of course, he didn't expect his journey to take six years, and in fact, he tells me that it's only *just* reached its conclusion. "In the beginning, I didn't know anyone so I'd spend about three or four days in one prefecture," he says. "But after a while, I got to know more people and they introduced me to others. In the end, I found myself spending more than a month in one prefecture just travelling around and meeting different people."

One of Nakata's rules when it comes to travel is that he must stay in a different hotel every night. "I want to know which are the best hotels and restaurants that my friends can try," he says of this practice. "I think the greatest luxury that one can have is experience. I mean, of course, you can find out about a hotel or a restaurant from the Internet, TV or magazines. But unless you have experienced it, you will never know why some things are considered the best. That's why I want to try everything, because I want to be able to say that I'm the best person to talk about my culture."

So just who are all these craftsmen and artisans that Nakata meets? Too many to discern, he demurs, but when prodded to elaborate further, he does let on that among the most memorable have been Japan's much-venerated *saké* makers.

According to Nakata, the country has around 1,300 active *saké* makers, of which he has only met about 250 by his estimation. After tasting all their *saké*, he chanced upon a special one that he considers the best that he's ever had the pleasure of drinking. This led to the creation of his own *saké* brand dubbed "N". The special *saké*, which has a limited production run of 1,000 bottles a year, isn't sold in Japan.

"They [Takagi Shuzo, the *saké* makers who collaborated with Nakata] just celebrated 400 years of *saké* making. Can you believe it? In Japan, there are so many families that survive the generations by making something. I think that's why so many foreigners love Japanese culture; it's because of our history and heritage. To continue something for that long is not easy, and sometimes, if not most of the time, it's inconvenient too," he observes.

For Nakata, convenience and ease aren't necessarily good things. He says that in today's world, where everything is cheaper, easier and faster, luxury is lost. "Luxury is time, history and effort. It'll never be easy because it's always

TOP BY BOTTEGA VENETA; TROUSERS BY BALLY; PINK GOLD AND DIAMONDS CROSS NECKLACE AND PINK GOLD AND DIAMONDS BRACELET, BOTH BY DAMIANI.





JACKET AND SHIRT, BOTH BY BOTTEGA VENETA; JEANS BY HUGO BOSS; PINK GOLD AND DIAMONDS CROSS NECKLACE AND BRACELETS, ALL BY DAMIANI.



“But let me ask you this: if you have an easy day, do you remember it? No. You remember the hard and difficult days. But what comes after? Happiness. Happiness comes after difficult moments, so that’s me. I don’t want to waste my time chasing ease and convenience. I want to find challenges so that I can experience happiness after that.”

difficult," he continues. "But let me ask you this: if you have an easy day, do you remember it? No. You remember the hard and difficult days. But what comes after? Happiness. Happiness comes after difficult moments, so that's me. I don't want to waste my time chasing ease and convenience. I want to find challenges so that I can experience happiness after that."

Nakata draws this creed from the many craftsmen and farmers that he's met whom he feels lead difficult and challenging lives in their pursuit of happiness. "It's not all about the money, but rather the real treasures in life. I think that's why artisans find it difficult to do business because they're too busy focusing on themselves and their challenges," he says.

"If you think about it, when luxury brands like Louis Vuitton or Gucci promote themselves, they always talk about their craftsmanship, and the effort and the time that go into making their products. While this might be apparent to Westerners, Asians think crafts are cheap because we have a lot of craftsmen here. But these are people with great skill and knowledge; they just lack the branding and the network. This is where I can come in as a bridge."

Nakata says he wants to create a network comprising Japanese artisans and craftsmen that he's met and the international market. He plans to use the experience gleaned from his travels to help improve these homegrown products and brands should they so wish.

His devotion to his cause is evident in his work with Japanese *saké*. According to the former footballer, he wants to create an international *saké* culture. He likens it to wine culture in terms of having many different variations and labels, but notes that *saké* is still relatively cheap. Which is why "N" was created. He stresses that his goal isn't to make millions, but rather to spur a market of high-end *saké* consumers, which, in turn, will encourage the master *saké* makers of Japan to look beyond their home country's shores.

"For my *saké*, we only produce 1,000 bottles and don't sell in Japan. We hope to pave the way for other makers to enter the international market. A bottle costs USD1,000 or more. We're really targeting a high-end market," he says. "Today's *saké* price range is quite narrow, which means not many companies become big, so we want to create that possibility. That's why I wanted to make a really high-end product. I'm telling other companies to do the same."

Nakata has chosen to start his journey by connecting artisans with the world through *saké* because he believes that the market for the rice wine is large enough to be promising. Globally, there are many Japanese restaurants with patrons who drink *saké*, he adds.

Then he throws me a curveball: "But how many people can name a *saké* brand right off the top of their heads? They usually just order *saké* and drink it. But do they know that there are almost 5,000 brands of *saké* in the world? If people know hardly anything about *saké* outside of Japan, the market cannot grow internationally, especially if there's a lack of branding."

Nakata has identified one obvious problem: all *saké* labels are in Japanese. But ever resourceful, he has also come up with a novel solution. "If you're a foreigner, you won't be able to understand what the label says," he says. "So I created a phone app, a *saké* label reader called "Sakenomy". Basically, you take a picture of the label and the app gives you all the information you need about that specific brand."

Nakata concludes that, at the end of the day, the Japanese don't make good salesmen, because when one is busy perfecting something, the thought of selling isn't a priority because perfection has yet been attained.

"We don't think about selling first, unlike other people who are more business-minded. In Japan, making money isn't foremost in our minds. We're constantly thinking of ways to make something better. Think of a road; it never ends. Our culture is the same: we constantly strive to be better. We want to achieve perfection, even though it is a never-ending road."

That said, Nakata reiterates that he is neither a craftsman nor a designer. "I'm not a designer, I don't design. I mostly just give ideas," he says. "The people that I work with—be it big brands like Damiani or Gucci or artisans—they have

"In Japan, making money isn't foremost in our minds. We're constantly thinking of ways to makes something better. Think of a road; it never ends. Our culture is the same: we constantly strive to be better."

PHOTOGRAPHS PRODUCED BY YIPIEYAYA STUDIO; HAIR BY CHIAKI SABATA; MAKE-UP BY JOEY YAP; STYLIST ASSISTED BY ALAA LOLLY MAMDOUH. LOCATION: THE RITZ-CARLTON RESIDENCE.

their own designers and craftsmen who create the art. I just put my aesthetics and image to it."

This neatly segues into talk about his collaboration with Damiani. "We have been friends for a long time and have always wanted to do something together," he comments of his latest pet project. "We waited because we didn't want a pure business venture, but something more meaningful. After a few years, we realised that we both have charitable foundations that are aligned with the same cause. And so the 'Metropolitan Dream' collection was born."

Nakata and Damiani resolved to target a younger market, something that the Italian jewellery maker hadn't done before. "I wanted to make something for young people," he adds. "Fine jewellery makers like Damiani are too expensive and perhaps a bit too sophisticated for them most of the time. So we used leather to make the pieces more fashionable and affordable."

Nakata, who says his favourite piece from the collection is a pink gold and diamond necklace, likes to keep it simple when it comes to his personal jewellery choices. "When I wear a suit, I like something more elegant like a small cross that won't distract from the clothes. But sometimes when that might be too simple, two crosses are perfect," he notes.

"I'm not much of an accessories guy, but it really depends on the occasion. I like simple things. This is why the collection is quite simple, like bracelets that look good whether worn with jeans or a suit. People think that jewellery is something very special, but for me, it's an everyday item, like a watch. It shouldn't get in the way of your style, but complement it."

Looking at this journey that Nakata has made through Japan, saké and Italian fine jewellery, I can't help but wonder if he misses football. "Well, I wouldn't say that I don't miss it," he concedes. "I still play for charity like the Laureus Sport for Good Foundation. That's always fun because they get retired players to come together for matches. When we play, it's just like old times. We have fun, and at the same time, we help people out."

He seems to be very sure of himself, having clearly compartmentalised his past achievements and his current journey. At times, it almost seems like he planned it all along. But Nakata is quite firm about the fact that he's not one to think so far ahead. "I prefer to take each day as it comes, because sometimes, the people that you meet or your experiences might send you on a different path than the one you had originally planned. I like to meet and talk to people, because when I do, I always get ideas, which then opens up new possibilities."

Nakata adds that his journey through Japan has allowed him to slowly build up the wants and the needs of his post-football life. "I have no regrets about anything and I don't pine for the past. I always live for the now," he asserts.

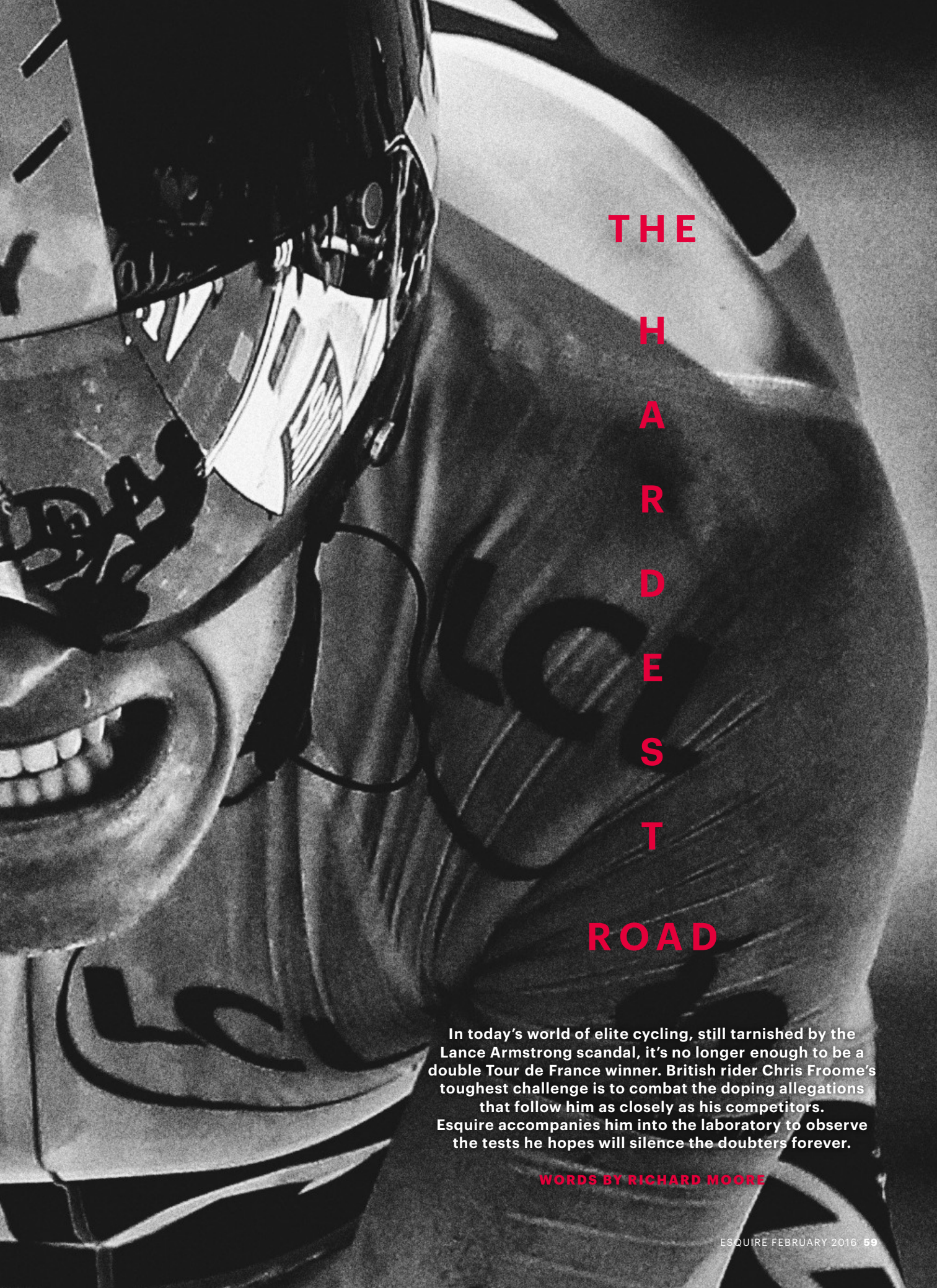
He also feels that while the past is something that you can't change, it is something that you can learn from. "You don't really need to look back and think over every detail. Just create something new, something better," he advises.

When some people told him not to waste his time travelling around Japan and just focus on work instead, he went ahead and did it anyway. And he continued to do so for the next six years. He didn't expect it to take so long, but now that his journey is drawing to a close, he is clearly grateful for the invaluable experience.

"I can do so many things. But it's always important to do something that nobody else has done, or something new that you have fun creating," he reflects. "In Japan, we have something called *kado*, which means "the way of the flower". It's a type of flower arrangement that sometimes uses dead foliage. This reflects the art of *kintsugi*, whereby we make anew something that is broken. In this, we find meaning in everything. There is never nothing; there is always meaning and important experiences."

And with such a Zen-like mindset, Nakata concludes that when one looks at something that is good, in the end, it's only a point of view. "That's why life is beautiful, because, depending on how you look at it, there is no 'bad' life. The angle is very important. Sometimes, you may meet challenges, but that is so you can do something better and create something new for yourself."


SKY



THE HARDEST ROAD

In today's world of elite cycling, still tarnished by the Lance Armstrong scandal, it's no longer enough to be a double Tour de France winner. British rider Chris Froome's toughest challenge is to combat the doping allegations that follow him as closely as his competitors. Esquire accompanies him into the laboratory to observe the tests he hopes will silence the doubters forever.

WORDS BY RICHARD MOORE

It was the hottest Tour de France in years. For 21 days last July, the world's leading cyclists fried beneath a scorching sun, particularly when they cut across the south, between the Pyrenees and the Alps. But no one felt the heat like Chris Froome.

Froome grew up in Africa, so it wasn't the temperature that bothered him. It was the rumours and innuendo, the scepticism and suspicion that stalked him on his 3,200km trip from Holland then around France. He was jeered and spat at. During the 14th stage, a spectator yelled "*Dopé*!", leaned into the road and emptied a cup over his head. The liquid splashed over Froome's face and he could tell—or smell—that it was urine.

Following the stage, Froome, in the leader's yellow jersey that he would wear all the way to the finish in Paris, blamed "irresponsible reporting" for convincing a significant and vocal number of roadside fans that he was the heir to the disgraced Lance Armstrong: a cheat and a doper. The French media were particularly sceptical—"*Le Péril Jaune*" (The Yellow Peril) said the headline in *Libération*. "Questions surround the phenomenal performances of Christopher Froome," said *Le Figaro*. On French TV, the former rider Laurent Jalabert said Froome was "on another planet", interpreted by most as a deliberate echo of a 1999 headline in *L'Equipe* about the bogeyman, Armstrong.

In France's newspaper of record, *Le Monde*, a man who has come to be Froome's nemesis, the coach-turned-journalist Antoine Vayer, went even further: "Chris Froome will not win a third Tour de France if his equipment is checked at the right time and in the right place. It also remains for us to study his 'exceptional' and 'special' capabilities in laboratory conditions, which has never been done."

Vayer has been voicing his suspicion since Froome won his first Tour in 2013, but now he was suggesting something more sinister than performance-enhancing drugs—that Froome wasn't cheating by putting something in his body, but in his bike: a motor.

More challenging than anything Froome had to deal with on the road was this more insidious and opaque opponent: suspicion. There can be no more vivid an illustration of how contaminated the event has become than the fact that merely winning can elicit suspicion, distrust and a refusal to believe. In part it is the legacy of Armstrong who was stripped in 2012 of his seven "victories", but still, as the sport's self-proclaimed Voldemort, casting a long, dark shadow.

"What more can I do, as a clean athlete?" asked Froome towards the end of the Tour. Some responded that he could release data about his performances and physiology. The debate focused in particular on Froome's ability in his favourite terrain, the mountains, where various sports scientists and armchair experts were able to calculate his power output—to varying degrees of accuracy—and decide whether they believed it was plausible or not.

Vayer was one of these experts, though whether he is a scientist or an armchair expert is also subject to debate. He was a trainer for Festina in the '90s, the team at the centre of a huge doping scandal in 1998. Vayer wasn't involved in doping the team, but he was able to measure the effects of doping. This, he suggests, gives him a unique insight. He admits to Esquire that he has no qualifications in the scientific field; he is a physical education teacher, schooling 12-to-16-year-olds in his native Brittany. "I am not a scientist, but I know about Chris because I am inside the peloton," he says. "I have worked with enough riders to know the [natural] limits."

Based on his estimates of Froome's power data, Vayer has declared Froome's performances on selected climbs (Ax 3-Domaines in 2013, La Pierre-St-Martin in 2015) either superhuman or "mutant". He categorises performances as falling in a "*zone humaine*" or "*zone suspecte*". He says that some of Froome's rides fall into the second category.

Vayer has also called for Froome to release his VO2 max—his maximum oxygen uptake—since this is the best measure of an endurance athlete's physical capacity. In response, Froome has said that he doesn't know his VO2 stats, since he has not been tested in a laboratory. In fact, he has, but more on this later.

The problem many have with Froome dates back to September 2011, when he upstaged his Team Sky leader, Bradley Wiggins, by finishing second in one of the three Grand Tours, the Vuelta a España.

It was a performance that beggared belief: a bewildering metamorphosis by a 26-year-old rider in his fourth year as a professional. Froome had been on the verge of losing his contract, but the 2011 Vuelta simultaneously launched him as a star, as well as a thousand conspiracy theories about how it had been achieved. He explained that he had suffered from bilharzia, a parasitic disease common in Africa, which medication had finally got under control. Since then, he has won the Tour de France twice, but the relatively late transformation remains an impossible leap of faith for non-believers. The euphemisms are numerous: he is "superhuman", "mutant", "extraordinary".

Fans of the sport, so bruised and battered by sordid revelations concerning not just Armstrong but decades of institutionalised doping, have a hard time accepting the extraordinary.









Clockwise from top right: Looking noticeably chunkier than he is now, at the 2008 UCI World Championships; spectators at the 2014 Tour de France make their suspicions known to the competing riders. Taking the plaudits after winning the 100th Tour De France in 2013, beating his nearest rival by four minutes 20 seconds; displaying his bronze medal at the 2012 Olympics, alongside multiple gold-medallist and Sky teammate Bradley Wiggins.

A few weeks after his torrid July, Britain's only double Tour de France winner enters a dark glass building on the edge of a business park, alongside the Grand Union Canal in Brentford, west London. Nobody recognises the gaunt figure in a grey hooded top, black tracksuit bottoms and grey trainers on his six-minute walk from the Novotel. Worrying he'll be late for his 9AM appointment, he has gone ahead, leaving his heavily pregnant wife to follow in a taxi. When the cab arrives, Michelle Froome emerges hauling a large, battered black box, inside which is her husband's bike.

It was in the final week of the Tour that Michelle—also Froome's manager—emailed the GlaxoSmithKline Human Performance Lab asking if they'd be willing to do some tests. The sports science facility, funded by the pharmaceutical giant, opened two years ago and is regularly visited by Jenson Button, Rory McIlroy, the England rugby team, the Brownlee triathlon brothers, round-the-world rowers and polar explorers.

As well as the lab's own team of sports scientists—all in GSK-branded black polo shirts, black trousers and shoes—an external expert is present: Jeroen Swart, sipping a paper cup of coffee having just arrived on the red-eye from Cape Town. Swart is a world-renowned sports physician and exercise physiologist at the University of Cape Town. He also sits on South Africa's doping control review commission.

When Froome arrives, he doesn't carry himself like

a superstar athlete. He is unassuming and has no entourage—surprising for a man whose GBP2 million salary could be enhanced significantly by the bonuses and endorsements that will come with his second Tour victory. Taking the box from Michelle, he opens it, rummages for his tools and assembles the bike, attaching pedals and wheels. He then hides the box, conscious that there is a photographer and that it has non-sponsor-approved stickers. He is polite and courteous as he is given a tour of the impressive facilities, from the freezers containing human samples (muscle tissue, urine, faeces) to the cognition lab, where he volunteers to undergo some brain tests later.

First, since Froome has fasted overnight, he has some scans to determine his body composition: how much is muscle and how much is fat. The results are surprising. He looks emaciated (though he has put on almost 3KG in the three weeks since the Tour ended, going from 67 to 69.9KG) but while 61.5KG of his body is lean mass, 6.7KG is pure fat: 9.8 percent. Since athletes have been known to have as little as four or five per cent body fat, it seems high.

Froome says he isn't surprised, that his gangly arms and legs give him the appearance of being skinnier than he is. He also says that it was much higher in 2007 when he had just arrived in Europe from South Africa as a 22-year-old. He was a trainee at the UCI World Cycling Centre, based at the governing body's headquarters in Switzerland, and he recalls being tested in a Lausanne laboratory. But he can't remember the results and has no idea where the report is, despite it being potentially key to his story. If Froome always had the physiology of a Tour winner, the clues should be in that report. Michelle says she has been trying to track down the scientist who carried out the 2007 tests.

"Questions do need to be asked. As long as the questions are fair, I'm happy to answer them. What gets my back up is when those questions turn into straightforward accusations"

Having done the body scans, Froome tucks into some fruit and sandwiches and strips for action, revealing a big, bloody wound on his knee. He smiles wryly. "I was taking my racing bike and my time-trial bike to wash them in the car wash." It was around the corner from his apartment in Monaco; he was riding one bike and wheeling the other alongside when the handlebars became entangled. "Down I went, quite heavily."

Since the Tour he has been riding in lucrative exhibition races all over Europe (including one the previous evening in Holland) and training hard for the forthcoming Vuelta. He mentions more than once that he feels tired—perhaps a sign of nerves ahead of the Vuelta, or anxiety about today's proceedings. "Yeah, I am a little bit nervous," he says of the tests. Which isn't surprising, since he knows he'll be judged by how he performs in this lab today. "At the end of the day, whatever the number is, I'm not going to be able to change it," he says. "But hopefully, it's going to satisfy some of the questions that have been asked."

Did the suspicion take anything away from his Tour win? "No, it didn't," he says. "Nothing is going to taint that for me. All that stuff, it was an added challenge and it did make it even harder, but in a way it feels like an even greater achievement."

But people—lots of them—have been calling him a cheat and a liar. Assuming he is not, it would only be natural to be hurt and angry. Froome, whose even temper and preternatural calm must be useful in the heat of battle, replies, "Certainly, yeah, it's hard not to get angry. You think, hold on, what people are actually accusing me of is so severe—it's basically calling me a complete fraud. All the hard work, all the training, goes out of the window when someone says you're doping. It does bother me. But at the same time I can understand where the questions are coming from. Questions do need to be asked. As long as the questions are fair, I'm happy to answer them. What gets my back up is when those questions turn into straightforward accusations.

"I know what I've done to get here. I'm the only one who can really say 100 percent that I'm clean. I haven't broken the rules. I haven't cheated. I haven't taken any secret substance that isn't known of yet. I know my results will stand the test of time, that 10, 15 years down the line people won't say, 'Ah, so that was his secret.' There isn't a secret."

How about Vayer's suggestion that he might have a motor concealed in his bike? Froome, eating a sandwich, splutters. "That's nuts. Can you imagine?" Yet, there has been speculation that so-called 'motorised doping' is a real possibility. Bike checks are now routine. "They tested my bike three or four times during the Tour," Froome says. "I find it very hard to believe that anyone has done it, but there are rumours and the technology does exist, so I'm sure people are going to be asking questions. Fair enough, I think they should be checking the bikes."

When Froome is ready, Phillip Bell and Matt Furber, senior sports scientists at GSK, and Ken van Someren, the lab's director of research and development, explain the three tests he'll undergo. Two submaximal efforts, in cool then hot conditions, will measure his sustainable power. In between, a max test—"the fun one," says Bell—will determine his VO2 max: his body's rate of oxygen uptake.

This is the score that Froome knows will make the headlines. But what does it actually mean? Bell explains: "For the general population, VO2 max is somewhere around 35 to 40. For the general gym-goer, it can be in the high 40s. An active team sports player, 50s. Once you hit high 50s to 60s, that's when you're getting to the more highly trained individual. You'd expect Tour de France cyclists to be in the high 70s and above."

It is determined by genetics and by training (up to a point: if your VO2 is 40, you will not increase it to 80). Losing weight will increase VO2, since body weight is part of the calculation. It can be boosted by doping, especially blood doping (EPO hormones or blood transfusions increase the red blood cell count; red blood cells transport oxygen). But another important consideration is that VO2 is not the sole determinant of performance,







Clockwise from top: Froome reporting for a drug test during the 2013 Tour De France; a spectator lunges and spits at Froome on last year's Tour; Froome is put through his paces in the GlaxoSmithKline laboratory, as scientists monitor his power and endurance levels in order to compare them to his competition performance levels.

otherwise the Tour could be decided in a laboratory rather than with a 3,219KM road race. Some athletes perform poorly in a lab compared to a race situation; some athletes can operate at up to 90 percent of their VO2 capacity for an hour, most cannot. The submaximal tests, meanwhile, will give an idea of Froome's ability to sustain power.

Several weeks beforehand, Froome had been threading his way through a narrow corridor of thousands of people—most cheering, some booing, one or two spitting—up Alpe d'Huez on the penultimate day of the Tour. The tiny Colombian climber Nairo Quintana had attacked him and was riding away. Froome was at his limit, clinging on to his overall lead and his yellow jersey. In the end, he held it by just one minute 12 seconds.

The lab is an artificial and sterile environment in which his bike is fixed to a static trainer and a mask is attached to his face, but the effort required is the same. "It's true," Froome says, "that in the lab you don't have that mental stimulus of a Colombian attacking you right when you're on your limits." Nor does he have to measure or calculate his effort—he is riding to exhaustion, not in the knowledge that the road continues to climb.

The VO2 test is a killer: the whole point is to ride until you can ride no more. The early part is benign, the watts going up incrementally and barely discernibly. After seven minutes, the strain starts to show. As the resistance increases every 30 seconds—it's like riding on a ramp that is gradually getting steeper and steeper—Froome begins to shift in the saddle. Veins bulge in his forehead. Ten minutes, 11, 12... It's a test that has been compared to thumb screws: at what point can you take no more? And which concedes defeat first—body or mind? In a race situation, going toe-to-toe with a rival on a climb, Froome is in no doubt that it is the mind that is in control. "It's about the body only up to a certain point. There comes a point when you're both so far into the red and so far over your limit that it turns mental; it's a mental game," he says. "It's like you both have your hands in the fire and the first to pull out loses."

In the lab, his only opponent is himself and a computer screen that he can't see. As he goes deeper into the red in the lab, his arms bend, he grimaces, his nose drops towards the handlebars, he shifts around with greater urgency, searching for a comfortable position—unlike

on the road, he can't get out of the saddle—while sweat pours onto his bike. The number on the screen, indicating VO2, reads 80, 81, 82. It climbs to 90, 91, but the score is taken not on a single reading but on his average for a period of 30 seconds.

Now, in the final throes, the lab staff begin to encourage Froome, yelling him on as his elbows bend and his head sinks and he cracks. Abruptly the force goes out of the pedals like air from a popped balloon. "Off the charts," says Bell. "We've never had anything close to that in the lab."

When the numbers are crunched Froome's V02 is 84.6. At his Tour de France weight, it would correlate to 88.2. A few athletes have been measured in the 90s (the highest recorded by a cyclist is believed to be by the three-time Tour winner Greg LeMond, with 92.5) but, says Bell, "Froome's values are close to what we believe are the upper limits for VO2 peak in humans."

The submaximal tests—where Froome rides for 40 minutes on the trainer with blood samples taken at regular intervals to measure the lactate concentration, which indicates his state of fatigue—take less out of Froome but require further analysis.



In Cape Town a few weeks later, I catch up with Swart. "These tests give us an idea of what intensity Chris would be able to sustain for 20 to 40 minutes," Swart says, "which is roughly the length of a Tour climb."

This is critical because observers such as Ross Tucker, a South African sports scientist, have claimed that sustained power over 90 percent of V02 would put any rider in the suspicious category. As for the figures in watts, Vayer uses a traffic light system: sustained output of 410 watts is "green" (suspicious); 430 is "amber" (miraculous); 450 watts is "red" (mutant).

In his test in the lab, Froome's peak power is 525 watts and his sustained power, which he should be able to maintain for 20 to 40 minutes, is 419 watts. The figure corresponds to 5.98 watts-per-kilogram; at his Tour weight of 67KG, it would be 6.25W/KG. Using Vayer's model, that puts him firmly in the suspicious category. Swart disagrees: "I've seen a value of 5.8W/KG being spoken of as the upper limit of human performance for a 40-minute effort. But 6.2W/KG is definitely doable for Chris for 20 minutes if not longer.

"Chris's peak power is 525 watts, which corresponds to 7.51W/KG: a massive figure," Swart continues. "But the interesting thing is that the [sustained] figure of 6W/KG—which is basically what he produced in the lab—is 79.8 percent of his peak power. That's a completely reasonable percentage."

One problem that Vayer and others have is the lack of published and verified data relating to the top riders. Vayer says he works with elite cyclists but won't say who. He isn't impressed when I tell him that Froome has finally been to a lab to be tested. "What was the lab, what was the protocol? I would have preferred he came to my lab."

On Twitter, Michelle had released a short clip from the end of Froome's max test, with the scientists' yells of encouragement audible. "I have seen the video," says Vayer. "Yes, the cheers, this is not how we do a VO2 test. But it's like everything with Froome... a *mise en scène* [a stage-managed show]."

The report is the missing link in the Froome story. Did he undergo a dramatic—and suspicious—transformation, or were there clues in 2007 that he could become a champion?

What would convince Vayer that Froome was clean? He once said that if Froome had a VO2 max of 90 then he might give him the benefit of the doubt, but not any more. "Nothing would convince me," he says. "He should have called me a year ago and said, 'Vayer, you make me angry, let's sit together.' If you are clean and you have doubters, you phone your doubters, don't you think? Because I am quite influential."



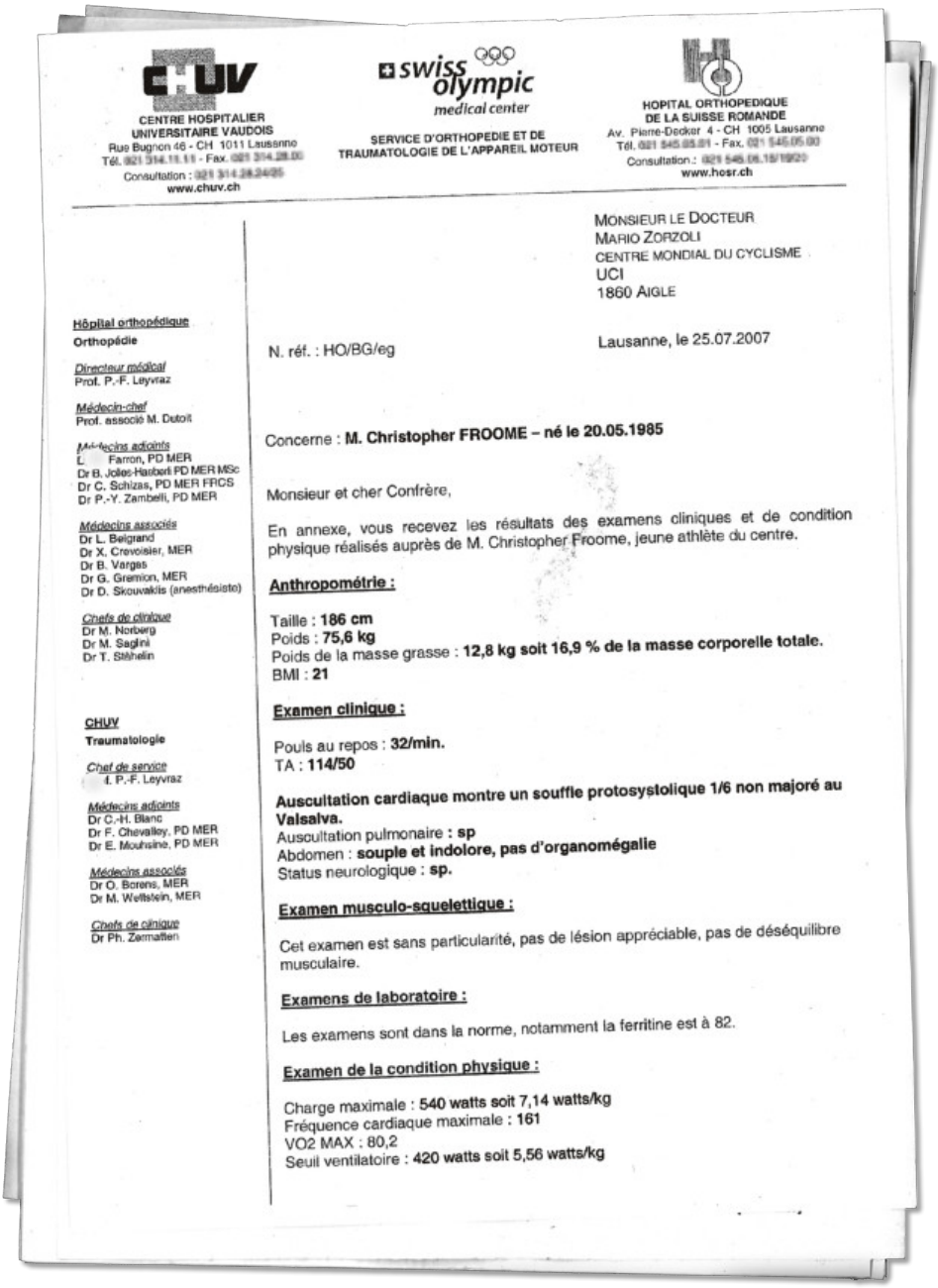
Soon after, I return to London and meet Froome again. He didn't finish the Vuelta, crashing early on a stage in Andorra billed as the "toughest in Grand Tour history". Froome finished the stage but couldn't walk afterwards. He'd fractured his foot. Even more painful, he says, was watching the rest of the race on television. He is relieved today that a specialist has given him the all-clear to return to training.

He now knows the results from his recent lab tests. "It's interesting and I'd like to do more," he says. "One of the reasons was to understand more about my physiology and maybe find ways to be better. I'd like to do the VO2 test again, because I was definitely quite tired. I can do better."

He has other interesting news: Michelle has finally managed to track down the report from the tests carried out on Froome in Lausanne on July 25, 2007. It's the missing link in the Froome story. Is he an athlete who underwent a dramatic—and suspicious—transformation, or were there clues in 2007 that he could become a champion?

The latter, says Swart. What is striking is how similar the two reports, eight years apart, are. Apart from one thing. Froome was 75.6KG: more than 8KG heavier than his current race weight. His body fat was 16.9 percent. "Frankly, for an elite cyclist, that's chubby," says Swart. "But he produced better figures: peak power of 540 [15 watts higher than in August 2015], threshold of 420—we made it 419, so it's one watt less." His V02 max in 2007 was 80.2.

"The engine was there all along," says Swart. "He just lost the fat."



CENTRE HOSPITALIER UNIVERSITAIRE VAUDOIS
Rue Bugnon 46 - CH 1011 Lausanne
Tél. 021 314.11.11 - Fax. 021 314.28.00
Consultation : 021 314.24.24/25
www.chuv.ch

swiss olympic medical center
SERVICE D'ORTHOPEDIE ET DE TRAUMATOLOGIE DE L'APPAREIL MOTEUR

HOPITAL ORTHOPEDIQUE DE LA SUISSE ROMANDE
Av. Pierre-Decker 4 - CH 1005 Lausanne
Tél. 021 545.05.01 - Fax. 021 545.05.00
Consultation : 021 545.05.15/1920
www.hosr.ch

Hôpital orthopédique
Orthopédie

Directeur médical
Prof. P.-F. Leyvraz

Médecin-chef
Prof. associé M. Dutoit

Médecins adjoints
L. Farron, PD MER
Dr B. Jolles-Haeberli PD MER MSc
Dr C. Schizas, PD MER FRCS
Dr P.-Y. Zambelli, PD MER

Médecins associés
Dr L. Belgrand
Dr X. Crevoisier, MER
Dr B. Varges
Dr G. Gremion, MER
Dr D. Skouvaklis (anesthésiste)

Chefs de clinique
Dr M. Norberg
Dr M. Saglini
Dr T. Stähelin

CHUV
Traumatologie

Chef de service
f. P.-F. Leyvraz

Médecins adjoints
Dr C.-H. Blanc
Dr F. Chevalley, PD MER
Dr E. Mouhsine, PD MER

Médecins associés
Dr O. Borens, MER
Dr M. Wettstein, MER

Chefs de clinique
Dr Ph. Zermatten

MONSIEUR LE DOCTEUR
MARIO ZORZOLI
CENTRE MONDIAL DU CYCLISME
UCI
1860 AIGLE

N. réf. : HO/BG/eg

Lausanne, le 25.07.2007

Concerne : **M. Christopher FROOME – né le 20.05.1985**

Monsieur et cher Confrère,

En annexe, vous recevez les résultats des examens cliniques et de condition physique réalisés auprès de M. Christopher Froome, jeune athlète du centre.

Anthropométrie :

Taille : **186 cm**
Poids : **75,6 kg**
Poids de la masse grasse : **12,8 kg soit 16,9 % de la masse corporelle totale.**
BMI : **21**

Examen clinique :

Pouls au repos : **32/min.**
TA : **114/50**

Auscultation cardiaque montre un souffle protosystolique 1/6 non majoré au Valsalva.
Auscultation pulmonaire : **sp**
Abdomen : **souple et indolore, pas d'organomégalie**
Status neurologique : **sp.**

Examen musculo-squelettique :

Cet examen est sans particularité, pas de lésion appréciable, pas de déséquilibre musculaire.

Examens de laboratoire :

Les examens sont dans la norme, notamment la ferritine est à 82.

Examen de la condition physique :

Charge maximale : **540 watts soit 7,14 watts/kg**
Fréquence cardiaque maximale : **161**
VO2 MAX : 80,2
Seuil ventilatoire : **420 watts soit 5,56 watts/kg**

Lost and found:
This document of Froome's 2007 clinical tests in Switzerland goes some way to explaining the subsequent dramatic improvement in his race performances.

Carrying baggage:
The figures highlighted show that Froome's Body Mass Index (BMI) was abnormally high for an elite cyclist, backing up his claims that this extra weight—and possibly a parasitic disease since brought under control—hindered his progress.

Nothing new:
Highlighted at the bottom of the document is the VO2 max figure, which suggests Froome's capacity for endurance racing and potential to become a Tour champion existed long before he was accused of doping to win cycling races.

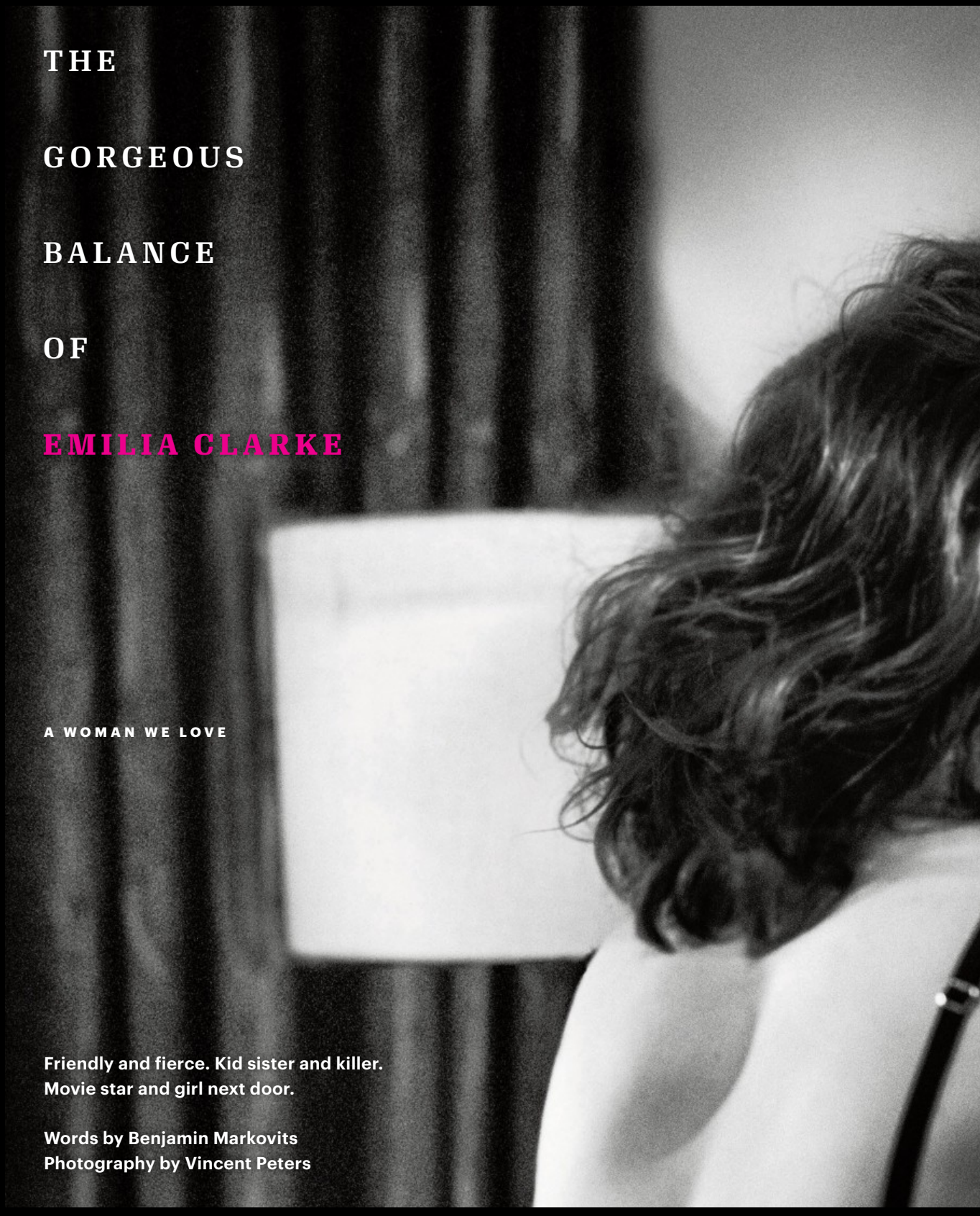
Nothing to hide — Froome's blood tests uncovered

Chris Froome has agreed to let Esquire publish the results of blood tests taken the morning after his test in the GSK Human Performance Lab, and also from the day before a victory that aroused suspicion at the 2015 Tour de France, at La Pierre Saint-Martin on July 14. We are also publishing his 2007 test results (above).

The tests on July 13 and August 20 were both unannounced tests, taken for the Athlete Biological Passport (ABP), which enables anti-doping authorities to compile a long-term profile of the athlete. Blood samples are not examined for drugs, but to spot the effects of drugs that stimulate red blood cell formation or for evidence of blood manipulation, such as withdrawal or transfusion. Scientists look at the percentage of immature red blood cells (reticulocytes), the haemoglobin concentration and the OFF-score, which indicates the balance between the haemoglobin concentration and the percentage of reticulocytes (a measure of the rate of red blood cell formation). Normal levels for each individual are established by the ABP software as more samples are gradually added to the athlete's profile over time.

On July 13, Froome's haemoglobin was 15.3 grams per litre (g/L) and 0.72 percent of his red blood cells were immature (the normal adult range is 0.5–2.5 percent). EPO stimulates the bone marrow, flooding the blood with immature cells, whereas a blood transfusion results in an excess of red blood cells, which suppresses the bone marrow and results in fewer immature red cells. His OFF-score, which approximates to the balance between the amount of red cells in his circulation and the rate of their formation, was 102.1. On August 20, Froome's haemoglobin was 15.3 and he had 0.96 percent immature red blood cells. His OFF-score was 94.21.

The Athlete Biological Passport wasn't introduced until 2009, so his 2007 sample can't be directly compared to his ABP values from 2015. This is because strict criteria for the sample collection, storage and subsequent processing are required for ABP bloods, resulting in far more accurate and reliable values than existed previously. This situation didn't apply in 2007 and, furthermore, there's no reticulocyte measurement or OFF-score available for this sample. However, bearing those limitations in mind, Froome's haemoglobin was 14.5 on this occasion.



THE GORGEOUS BALANCE OF EMILIA CLARKE

A WOMAN WE LOVE

Friendly and fierce. Kid sister and killer. Movie star and girl next door.

Words by Benjamin Markovits
Photography by Vincent Peters



Years ago, when I was a grad student, I worked at an ice cream shop in Oxford called George & Davis'. Students from Teddies, one of the local private schools just up the road, used to come in all the time. One of them was **Emilia Clarke**. ¶ She's 28 now, one of the stars of *Game of Thrones*, the mother not just of dragons but of John Connor in the latest *Terminator* movie, and **Esquire's Sexiest Woman Alive**. It's Sunday lunchtime. I was supposed to be taking my kids to Legoland. But I'm not—I'm going to interview Emilia. ¶ My taxi pulls up at a house in Hampstead, an inner London suburb. Academics and writers used to live there. Now only bankers and lawyers and movie stars can afford it—you hear a lot of American accents on the street. Emilia's house is part of a beautiful Georgian "terrace" (English for a section of row houses) with long front lawns, pretty pastel-coloured stucco walls, big windows you can step out of. It's just across the road from Hampstead Heath: 800 acres of hills, hedgerows and countryside in the middle of London.



The weather is classic English summer's day. It rained the night before, it will rain later that evening, but at lunchtime there's a kind of chilly truce and the overcast sky has a certain brightness to it. Emilia comes out of the house to meet me—the buzzer isn't working, and she shouts instructions apologetically from the doorstep as I fumble with the garden gate. She's wearing dark jeans and low cowboy boots and a cloud-soft and cloud-coloured cashmere top.

"I'm sorry if I'm shouting," she tells me. "I was at a Metallica concert last night."

The members of Metallica turn out to be huge fans of *Game of Thrones*, so they comped some of the cast a few tickets. If you're Emilia Clarke, these kinds of things keep happening to you. Last year, she toured the DMZ between North and South Korea with Arnold Schwarzenegger to promote *Terminator Genisys* (out now on DVD). In September, she accepted the Woman of the Year award from *GQ*. And today she has to hang out with a middle-aged, slightly etiolated Texan she's never met, who is supposed to take her to Crystal Palace to play something called Game of Phones—a *Thrones*-flavoured quiz and treasure hunt put on by a social-networking company called Thinking Bob. It's aimed at people who want to make new friends in a strange, new city.

So far as I can tell, Emilia doesn't really need more friends. There's also the worry that she might get mobbed, which is why she's going in disguise. I'm supposed to provide the disguise. It's possible that I'm supposed to be the protection, too.

In England, what you do, when you're nervous about something, is you make a cup of tea. Emilia offers me a cup of tea.

Everything about her house suggests someone older than her years—it's a family home for a single young woman. There's a fancy upstairs sitting room, which is partly for show and a little sparsely furnished. There's a chesterfield under the window, there are books on the mantelpiece (including the latest Colm Tóibín novel), and a funny/pretty and probably expensive large vase decorating the hearthstone. The real life in these houses is downstairs, in the basement kitchen, where the servants used to operate, and that's where she takes me.

The kitchen looks cooked in. There's a big cast-iron oven where the chimney used to be and a cookbook lying on the counter, still sticky with ingredients. She makes her own granola, which sits half finished in a tall preserving jar.

It turns out she also has a lot of tea. She opens a cupboard, she pulls out a drawer, both of them overflowing with complicated varieties.

"How do you take it?" she says. "In my family, we always argue about the order of pouring. I'm a milk-first kind of girl."

Emilia's father was a working-class kid from Wolverhampton, a depressed industrial city near Birmingham. He was desperate to do anything that would get him out of Wolverhampton and became a roadie, then began working as a sound designer for a number of big-budget musicals in London. Her

mother went to secretarial college, and must have had *drive* by the bucketload, because she started her own business and ended up as a marketing VP. Whether they meant to or not, Emilia's parents were pulling their children up the class ladder of English life.

"They didn't want me to go to boarding school," Emilia says. "*I* wanted to. My brother was already going [he's two years older], and I fancied his friends."

"Did you end up going out with them?"

"Of course."

There's a kind of change of tone or pace that Emilia Clarke's very good at. She uses it in her acting, too, and can go from sentimental or angry to comic at the drop of a hat. It all shows up in her face if she wants it to—she's got great mobility of expression. Accents play a part in these shifts. Her own accent is a nicely plainspoken kind of "well-brought-up," but she dips into others, northern English or American for jokes or to make a point. She can do Wolverhampton, too, even though her father doesn't speak it anymore—he sounds like her, she says.

There are stories she's told about being taken to see *Show Boat* (her dad was in the crew) when she was three and falling in love with the theatre and deciding then and there that she would act. But she also liked attention, she says. She liked playing games. And she liked winning them.

"And your father was in the business?" But she shakes her head.

"He was crew, not cast; there's a big divide.... He wanted me to be very realistic about the whole thing, about how nobody makes any money. The only line you'll ever need to learn, he told me, is *Do you want fries with that?*"

His realism turned out to be off the mark. Sometimes, surrealism comes closer to the truth.

I brought along three disguises: a brown fedora I haven't worn since college; a glittery, vaguely ethnic shawl; and an Oklahoma City Thunder cap, bright blue, with the kind of brim that sticks up. (I live in London now, but I'm from Austin originally; Kevin Durant is the man.) She picks the cap and my wife's old sunglasses, tortoiseshell-rimmed and pointy at the edges. I don't know what she looks like. She looks great.

On the cab ride over, Emilia explains that she wasn't anyone's "favourite" at the Drama Centre, where she studied, but she worked hard—"I was a keen bean." After graduating, she did a couple of episodes of *Doctors* (a long-running British daytime soap) and starred in some movie for a sci-fi channel that she still hasn't seen. By this point she was living with friends and working three jobs, at a bar, at a call centre, and—she didn't tell me the third one. But she did say that a friend of hers walked in once and saw her face, the face you make when you don't know people are watching. It had a scowl on it. She'd given herself a year to make it in acting and she hadn't.

"And then my agent calls me up and says, 'Did you ever go up for *Game of Thrones*?'" The original pilot for the show had already been shot but nobody was happy with it, so HBO was digging back into the casting pile to try and save it. This is where Emilia came in. "My agent told the casting director, 'I know that the breakdown for this character is tall and willowy and blonde. I know she's short and round and brown, but I'd like you to see her.'"

"I had two scenes which told me nothing and not very much time in which to read all those [George RR Martin] books," says Emilia. "So I did what every good actor does and Wikipedia'd the living crap out of it."

"Do you have a sense now of what they wanted?"

"Yeah ... someone who could grow before your eyes in one season, who could gather strength and show vulnerability, they wanted the arc...."

And then the show itself took off—and Emilia had one of the few characters who couldn't be killed. She is the Mother of Dragons, after all.

She manages to bring together a number of opposites, to make them natural: sweetness and toughness, emotionalism with a kind of cold-blooded determination. Something in these contrasts explains her sex appeal, too. She can play queen and kid sister, dominatrix and pal.

Crystal Palace is not a palace, exactly, more of a quiet backstreet behind a London train station. There's a gaggle of slightly cold-looking people waiting at the entrance to a park when we arrive. Somebody holds a bouquet of flags on sticks. Coming closer, we can see the logo: GAME OF PHONES. Emilia puts on her disguise—the cap, the glasses, an American accent. We've decided to call her Lilly.

Everyone separates into teams. What follows turns out to be very silly, in an am-dram kind of way, and a surprising amount of fun. Someone dressed in shopping-bag "chain-mail" mesh, with a mask of some sort on his face, reads out in his best pantomime-villain voice from a screed that announces our quest: "The lands of the East are... ruled by Lord Anchovy, the famed Fishy King." We have to locate a ruined phone box to find the first clue—the name of some mythical animal, inscribed next to a phone number. We troop off dutifully, on a grey bank-holiday Sunday, through a mostly empty park in deep south London.

It slowly becomes clear that nobody on our team watches *Game of Thrones*. This doesn't stop them from being nice people. There's a marketing director for a Thames-river-cruise company. Maybe 50 years old, one of those men, I get the sense, who wears shorts and sandals on the weekend regardless of the weather. The other woman on our team is a vaudeville dancer, a Cambridge graduate who pays the bills by tutoring kids in everything under the sun—including beading.

And then there's Emilia Clarke, whose costume, as she herself has realised, isn't necessary. As Daenerys, with that magical blonde wig and undercurrent of menace—the fun, young queen who can also order you dead—Emilia is unmistakable. But here, out of wig, sur-

rounded by middle-aged strangers, she's just a very attractive woman in an (extremely odd) crowd.

But she sticks to her disguise. Lilly's accent is perfect; she's a laid-back, friendly, slightly dead-inside Manhattanite. It's just not clear why she's wearing an Oklahoma City Thunder cap or tortoiseshell sunglasses on a rainy day. When Lilly, in her hard-soled cowboy boots, slips on the gritty path and comes up limping a little, I suddenly feel for her—because I know that the real Emilia has just recovered from a fractured hip (an injury incurred when she slipped and fell while out promoting *Terminator*). Part of me wants to call the whole thing off.

Except that Emilia (not Lilly) wants to win. She spots an old phone booth near the playground: an English classic, red as a post box, now (in this age of mobile phones) abandoned and graffitied and locked up. The vaudeville dancer tries to light up the dirty back wall by sticking her phone through a gap in the broken glass, but the clue inside refuses to reveal itself. Emilia has a go, too, with her phone. *Unicorn!* This is the password we must deliver to "Lord Anchovy" by "the great bell, a shrine to the God of drowned sorrows. . . ."

I've got a theory that movie stars (some of them at least) make it big partly because they epitomise something. Tom Cruise is the classic poor American kid on the make. His s**t-eating grin is both a seduction and a kind of screw you—the guy who runs up a bar tab after the company softball championship that he never intends to pay.

Emilia has the very real charm of a certain type of English upbringing. "A pocket rocket," my friend calls her—small, sexy, lively, and lots of fun. But there's a whole set of virtues that goes with the fun. There's an attitude to life.

Everybody has to "muck in"—a phrase that means helping out and getting your hands dirty and smiling at the same time. But they also get "stuck in." Like if you're having a picnic on a summer's day, and the beach is more dirt than sand, and the dirt is mud because it's raining, and there's nowhere to sit apart from an outflow pipe, and everybody's cold, you open a bottle of bubbly and *don't complain*. And not just don't complain but actually have a good time, because you've got "a sense of humour."

Or if somebody drags you out to a treasure hunt in Crystal Palace, in a disguise you don't need, you stick with it and try to win. You don't take yourself too seriously—all of these are very likable qualities. Emilia has them in spades.

On the hunt for the Iron Phone, the marketing director starts to tell a story about *Game of Thrones*, something he read in the paper about a father who hears his daughter has just got a part on the show. He feels tremendously proud and excited until he sees the first few scripts and finds out what she has to do: full frontal nudity, lots of sex. Maybe even a rape scene.

"It's not porn, it's HBO," someone chips in.

I don't know what Emilia—Lilly—is thinking now. But I know the story, too. The early episodes were hard to film, she'd told me in the cab. There was a lot of nudity, a rape scene, she was 23 years old, exposing her body. Her character suffered and she suffered with her. "Once, I had to take a little time out. I said I needed a cup of tea, had a bit of a cry, and was ready for the next scene."



Now she waits a beat.

"That must be awkward," Lilly says.

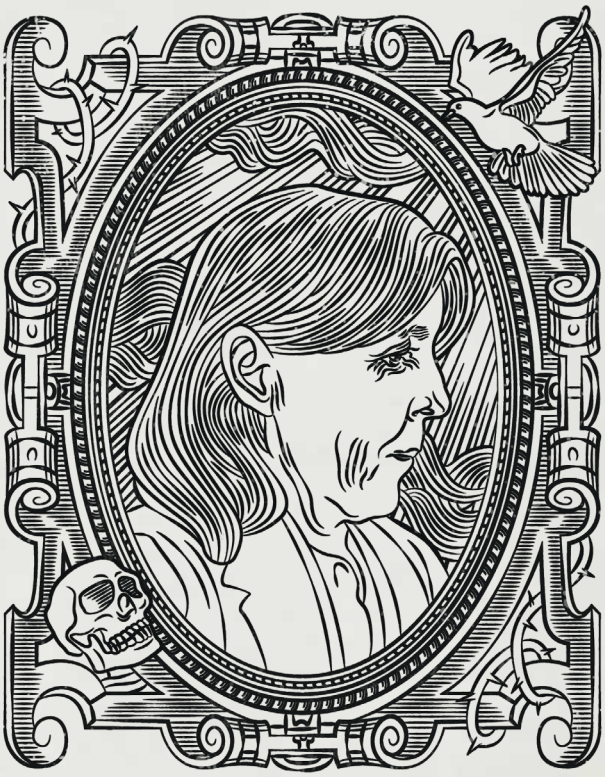
She's funny. She mucks in.

When we leave, Emilia decides not to tell the rest of our team who she is—they wouldn't know her anyway, she says. And you get the sense that for now, she's just fine with that.

"I'm trying everything I can not to be freaky," she tells me later in a pub. By freaky, she means letting the star treatment go to her head. She remembers the days at the call centre. The warning of cooking fries from her father. Her life before she was supposed to be noticed.

Half-pal, half-dominatrix. Half-kid sister, half-sexy queen. The movie star who plays, in her real life, an anonymous, funny beauty. This is the gorgeous balance of Emilia Clarke.

The WOMAN WHO SAVES *the* WORST PEOPLE AMONG US



JUDY CLARKE
Her latest client, Dzhokhar Tsarnaev, killed three people and disfigured 17 at the Boston Marathon.

As a lawyer, her client list reads like an A to Z of America's most heinous and notorious crimes: the Unabomber, the Boston Bomber, the 9/11 pilot. Yet she fought to save them all from the death penalty. By saving the worst among us, Clarke believes she's saving us all. Whether we like it or not.

WORDS BY JENNIFER PERCY
ILLUSTRATIONS BY JUN HUN YAP

CHAPTER 1

THE day Ted Kaczynski realised he was capable of murder was the same day he showed up to his psychiatry appointment to talk about becoming a transsexual. He wanted a sex change operation. His whole life, Ted Kaczynski was one of those guys who couldn't figure out how to connect with other people. He was awkward and insecure, and definitely a disaster with the women. But he longed to connect; he just couldn't figure out how to do it. And when he did try, in whatever way the Unabomber might, men and women alike rejected him. But as a transsexual—as a woman—the power dynamics might shift, or maybe his ability to connect to others would change. He didn't know, and wanted to talk to a psychiatrist about the desire. At the psychiatrist's office, he chickened out and left. On his way home, Kaczynski had an epiphany: He realised that he was capable of murder. And this murderous rage was directed toward the psychiatrist.

[2] Later he retreated to a single-room cabin in Montana's Scapegoat Wilderness and started killing people with mail bombs.

[3] Kaczynski never did meet anyone who lived up to his standards. "Imagine a grown man whose dream is to be an astronaut," he wrote of one victim, "his aspiration was so ignoble."

[4] Then he was in an orange jumpsuit at the Sacramento County Jail on the way to death row, and in walks an attractive lawyer named Judy Clarke who wants to save him. She's towering and speaks with a slight drawl. Kaczynski was asked to "approve" of her. And he did. She lavished him with attention and spent 80 hours a week trying to get to know him and his case. Every day Judy Clarke appeared.

[5] She put her hand on his shoulder a lot in the courtroom.

[6] In 1998, Kaczynski tried to explain his feelings in a letter to his pen pal, a psychologist and journalist named Gary Greenberg: "Those damn lawyers, Quin and Judy! I can't seem to get away from them. They make themselves indispensable to me through their willingness to perform essential services for me that no one else will perform.... And they're always so damned nice to me that I just can't stay mad at them, however much they deserve it. I don't know whether I've mentioned it before to you, but in spite of everything, I do have a strong personal attachment to Quin and Judy, and that's one of the reasons I can't seem to get rid of them."

[7] This relationship with Judy Clarke may have been the first time the Unabomber felt the erotics of courtship. The who is chasing whom favoured him.

CHAPTER 2

AT the federal courthouse in Boston, Judy Clarke is at the defence table with another shaggy-haired bomber. It's Dzhokhar Tsarnaev, the Boston Bomber, and the room is packed with his victims. Clarke brings out a photo of Dzhokhar to show the jury. He's a kid, maybe 12 years old, with a mess of curly black hair and bright eyes, his older brother's arm draped around his shoulder. She has a second photo. It's the Dzhokhar we all know, wearing a backwards baseball cap, a goofy grin on his face, minutes before two homemade pressure-cooker bombs ripped through a crowd of people at the 2013 Boston Marathon, killing three, permanently mutilating seventeen, and injuring 260.

[2] "What took Dzhokhar Tsarnaev from this to Dzhokhar Tsarnaev and his brother with backpacks, walking down Boylston?" she asks the jury.

[3] Dzhokhar, now 22, shifts his weight from left to right. He twirls his hair. Three years ago, when he hid on a boat and scribbled messages on the walls about paradise, a bullet shot through one cheek and out the other. It messed up his jaw, fractured his skull.

[4] Judy Clarke is 62 years old and has been a defence attorney for 37 years. She's lanky but wide in the hips. She is rough and curt, but her tone is motherly. Her pallor is appropriate for her specialty—the death penalty.

[5] Clarke has been the legal defender of almost every major American villain of the past 20 years, and never lost one to execution. These are people whose gross acts of murder and terror grow the largest in the public imagination. For many, as is the case with Dzhokhar Tsarnaev, this particular kind of terror goes back to the photo, to the time when we disbelieved that this kind of transformation was possible.

[6] People talk about "humanising" defendants to save them from death. Actually, defendants are quite human enough already. Some lawyers prefer the word *rehumanisation*. The task is to address the judge's, jurors', prosecutors', and public's perception of a defendant. The real story of any case is about events in the lives of human beings. We can't minimise the damage that they have done, but neither can we minimise the value of a person.

CHAPTER 3

SUSAN Smith was the first famous client. Smith strapped her two kids into the backseat of a car and let it roll into a lake. She blamed everything on a black man. For nine days, the world believed her fiction, and then she broke down and confessed. They say the kids would have sat in that car for five minutes

in complete darkness before the water started to rise. They might have searched for their mother. She was just there with them—until she opened the door and jumped to shore.

[2] There were others. Lisa Montgomery, who stole a woman's foetus. Shysty, the crack dealer who was put on trial with his identical twin. The Marine who said he didn't know about the human cargo in the back of his truck. The police officer with money problems. Joseph Duncan, who in May 2005 broke into a home in Idaho, bludgeoned a mother, her boyfriend, and a 13-year-old boy with a hammer, and grabbed a nine year-old named Dylan and an eight year-old named Shasta. He drove them to a remote campsite in the Montana wilderness. There he tortured and sodomised the boy and asked Shasta to watch while he blew Dylan's head off with a rifle.

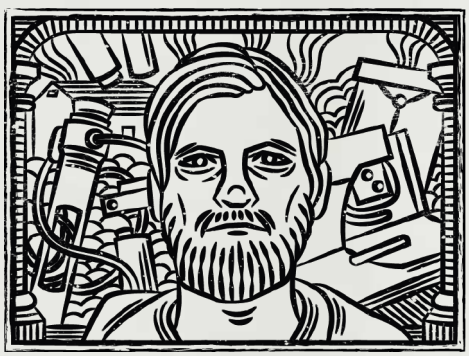
[3] Then the headliners. Eric Rudolph, lover of Christ, who bombed lesbian nightclubs, abortion clinics, the 1996 Olympics in Atlanta. He published tirades on the Army of God Web site, which featured photos of aborted babies in buckets of formaldehyde. Ted Kaczynski, the Unabomber, a lonely Harvard-educated mathematician who hated all things high-tech, including the jumbo jets that rumbled above his quiet wilderness in Montana. White supremacist Buford Furrow Jr., who shot up a Jewish centre in Los Angeles in 1999. Jared Loughner, who shot 19 people at a Safeway parking lot in Tucson, including Congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords.

[4] Zacarias Moussaoui racked up the largest victim count. He took pilot lessons out in Minnesota so he could help fly planes into the Twin Towers. At his trial, the victims told stories like the one given by Lee Hanson, who was on the phone with his son as his plane crashed. "Don't worry, Dad. If it happens, it will be quick." Then "Oh my God! Oh my God! Oh my God!" When the court presented a video of the tower's collapse, Moussaoui was smiling. He shuffled out of the courtroom with six life sentences singing Bruce Springsteen's "Born in the USA." as "Burn in the USA."

CHAPTER 4

HERE'S a story Judy Clarke once told a law-school commencement about hair and the OJ Simpson trial, but it's really a caveat about the media. The story starts with the Susan Smith trial. David Bruck, who met Clarke in law school at the University of South Carolina, invited Clarke to join Smith's defence team in 1995. Clarke, who was a psychology major in college, and at that point, had focused mainly on representing small, petty criminals, refused—she didn't think she was good enough. But Bruck thought she was just the kind of person—in fact, the only person—who could connect with Smith.

[2] The Smith case, which was a national news story, overlapped with OJ's trial, which was a global news story. It was a s**tstorm, even involving Marcia Clark's hair, which itself garnered a mini fever of media attention. It was curly, lots of locks, Sigourney Weaveresque! And then one day a few weeks later, it was suddenly a much more professional and sullen bob. a good hair day: prosecutor Marcia Clark sheds curls for a new look, declared an article in the *Los Angeles Times*. Clarke says it was that national debate, Curls vs. Bob, that helped push her to decide not to speak with the media. She wanted to be known for her skills, not her hair or makeup. So when Barbara Walters called seeking an interview about Susan Smith, Clarke didn't find the time. She still hasn't.



Ted Kaczynski, the Unabomber.

[3] After Clarke won Susan Smith a life sentence, she returned to her job as a public defender in Spokane and did agree to speak with her local paper, in one of her final interviews. The Smith trial was meganews, and so you can imagine this homecoming. The sober-faced local public defender, now a national celebrity, coming back to her little office and little town. The maintenance guy at the office came up to her, Clarke told *The Spokesman-Review*. "Welcome back. It's really good to have you back," he said, and then added, "I think they should have killed her."

[4] "People just didn't understand," Clarke said. "And maybe that's what we don't do as much as we should in death-penalty representation is make the person into one of us."

CHAPTER 5

TO know Judy Clarke is to know the stories of her clients. She learned the most from them; the clients Johnnie Cochran would call the "No Js," the folks charged with very ordinary crimes, or else those whose lives never made national news. They helped Clarke redefine what it means to win. It's never been

a multi-milliondollar celebration or a toast to a guilty verdict, she told the commencement. Instead it's more like a thank-you note from the Supermax. Or a phone call from a client on the anniversary of an acquittal. Two decades of "No Js" taught her "human frailty and the constant reminder that *there but for the grace of God go I*."

[2] Take John Lanny Lynch. He grew up in Las Vegas, and when he was in his twenties, he moved into an apartment complex called Pirates Cove. It was here that Lynch started doing drugs with two Mafia guys named Lawrence Pizzichiello and Brian Carriero. One day the three of them went on a camping trip in the Montana wilderness. By the end of the camping trip, Carriero was dead in a barrel.

[3] The way Pizzichiello remembered it, they were all taking a friendly stroll by the lake when Lynch pulled out a 9mm and shot Carriero in the head. Blood was all over the place, but Lynch shot him again to be sure. Then he robbed the corpse of his wallet and car keys. Later, he took his shoes. Lynch pleaded with Pizzichiello to hide the body. They stuffed it in a burn barrel, lit it on fire and let it burn. But it didn't burn everything, so they had to take rocks and make the bones small. They spread the ashes on the ground and buried the bigger chunks they couldn't splinter. Lynch's version is similar, except it's Pizzichiello doing the shooting.



Lisa Montgomery kidnapped a foetus.

[4] The first time Judy Clarke gained his trust was during a phone call at the Hamilton Jail. Clarke was telling Lynch about Pizzichiello's plan to pin everything on him, and her words must have triggered something deep inside Lynch, because he buckled and fell to the floor. Clarke heard the thud. The guards didn't know Lynch had had a seizure until Clarke called them.

[5] The day of his trial, Lynch was surprised by Clarke's demeanour in the courtroom—the Clarke he knew swore and wore jeans like everybody else. The prosecution brought in a cardboard box full of dirt and remains. It must have been sitting in the evidence room too long because the bottom broke and the remains spilled on the floor. Lynch didn't know what it was. He said hello to his mother in the front row, and the police marshal told him to quit it, and Lynch said *Screw you*, and Clarke wedged herself between the two men and explained to Lynch that Carriero's ashes were on the floor. Lynch felt another seizure coming on. The police swept up the remains in a dustpan and vacuumed the rest with a car-vac. The judge called for a lunch break.

[6] When it was Lynch's turn to testify, he started to shake and sweat, and it got so bad that Clarke had to stop asking him questions. She told him to drink water, but he was having trouble pouring it, and so Clarke walked over and poured it for him. When they had first met, Clarke yelled at him a lot—the evidence was piling up and Lynch wouldn't admit he had done it. Clarke persisted. She spent months digging deep into every corner of his life—things like the way his parents spoke to him, the music he enjoyed, the women he'd slept with, thoughts he had when he stared blankly into the sky. And at the federal courthouse in Missoula, with the dust of Carriero's body still lingering on the floor, Clarke presented the full tapestry of Lynch's life and all the events that led him to that burn barrel.

[7] The jury spared him death. Today, writing in an email from the Lompoc federal prison in California, Lynch calls Clarke "motherly."

CHAPTER 6

WHEN Ted Kaczynski, the Unabomber, faced charges for crimes that carried with them the penalty of death, his younger brother, David, didn't have much hope for him. No one had ever related to Ted—that was his whole problem. Not a single person. Even in elementary school, the other kids told him he was a freak. Maybe it was the pipe bomb he built in chemistry class. When David met his brother's defence attorney, Judy Clarke, in 1996, his feelings didn't change. He didn't think she could relate. Judy Clarke and Ted Kaczynski? He figured it would be like oil and water.

[2] Kaczynski had been arrested in a single-room cabin in Montana where, for 24 years, he'd lived off the land and plotted the death of people working to advance technology. Nobody would have found him, at least not then, if *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post* hadn't decided to publish an excerpt of his manifesto—attributed to the then anonymous Unabomber—about the deleterious effects of industrial society on the human race. David read the manifesto and recognised his brother in those words.

[3] "The Industrial Revolution and its consequences have been a disaster for the human race ... they have destabilised society, have made life unfulfilling, have subjected human beings to indignities.... There is no way of reforming or modifying the system so as to prevent it from depriving people of dignity and autonomy."

[4] David drove to his mother's apartment in Schenectady, New York, knocked on the door, and explained to Wanda Kaczynski that her older son was the Unabomber. Her face contorted in horror. The press surrounded David's home. For eight days he was alone with only the spectral images of Ted on television—now the Madman, the Terrorist. How must Ted feel knowing the only person in the world who was close to him had betrayed him? David Letterman called David the "Unasquealer." Others accused him of doing it for the money.

[5] Clarke became David's only connection to his brother. She met with Ted essentially every day for two years, and would often call David soon after each visit to go over what she'd heard. David started to sense an emotional connection between his brother and Clarke. One day Clarke showed up with a drawing Ted had sketched during a meeting. It was a picture of a woman jogging. She'd told Ted that she loved to run. To David, that connection was a lot. That was huge.



Dzhokhar Tsarnaev blew up the Boston Marathon.

[6] In April of that year, the defence team flew Wanda to San Francisco to meet with a psychiatrist. When she returned home, David found her hunched and sobbing on the couch. David, I think they're going to blame me, she said. Am I responsible? Would only a horrible mother give birth to the Unabomber?

[7] David called Clarke and asked if she would talk to his mother. She called right away, and as they spoke, David watched his mother transform, the pale husk replaced by vigour.

[8] What did she say? David asked.

[9] If I'm truthful, then nobody will be the villain and no one will be blamed, Clarke had told Wanda. I'm going to present this: Theodore Kaczynski the human being.

CHAPTER 7

THE bomb was the type designed "to tear people apart and create a bloody spectacle," the prosecution says. "The purpose of that type of bomb is to shred flesh, shatter bone, set people on fire, and cause its victims to die painful, bloody deaths and permanent disfigurement."

[2] Officer Thomas Barrett says the whole thing felt like opening an oven. Officer Lauren Woods remembers clearing vomit from Lingzi Lu's lungs. Karen Rand McWatters says there was blood pouring out where her leg used to be. Another victim remembers seeing a foot with a sock on it and wondering, *Did I wear a sock today? No. Good, so it was someone else's foot*. When a man came to help, he picked her up, but she felt something loose. She thought maybe she was wearing strappy sandals, and she looked down, and it was actually her foot dangling. Shane O'Hara remembers a gunpowder smell, and maybe, a burned hair smell, too.

[3] Now the prosecution shows a video a man filmed before he was blown through the air. He remembers a mix of blood, gravel, shrapnel, sneakers, locks of blonde hair, and thrashing. Maybe a mum and her daughter?

[4] After the explosion, Rebekah Gregory was hoisted in the air and thrown back, and when she looked down, she couldn't find her leg. There were just bones lying next to her on the sidewalk and pools of blood and people's body parts all over. She lifted up her arms to grab her son, Noah, but the bones were coming out of her leg.

[5] The defence has no questions.

[6] At a break, some of the people in the bombing videos are outside. "It's a miracle they're all alive," someone whispers. "Almost like they have risen from the dead." When Jeff Bauman limps by on two prosthetic limbs, the hallway goes quiet. He isn't used to them yet and he has to wear shorts even in the winter because his pants trip him up.

[7] After three weeks and 92 witnesses for the prosecution, it's Clarke's turn to present Dzhokhar Tsarnaev's case. There's no stream of witnesses. There are four, and the testimony lasts less than six hours. The testimonies focus on the role of Dzhokhar's older brother, 26-year-old Tamerlan. The way his computer seemed to be the source of militant propaganda; how his fingerprints covered the bombs; how he was steps ahead of Dzhokhar at the Boston Marathon, scouting a place to drop the bomb.

[8] During this first phase of the trial, the jury's decision is binary. Either Dzhokhar

Tsarnaev is guilty or not. Clarke conceded in her opening statement that Tsarnaev did it, because it's never about getting them off. It's about one thing: saving them from death.

CHAPTER 8

MOST days, the residents of Melvern, Kansas, thought 36-year-old Lisa Montgomery was pregnant. They'd lost count of the number of miscarriages she claimed to have had. In one incident, she said she donated her lost foetus to science. Sometimes, she prayed for a child with Reverend Wheatley at the First Church of God. Montgomery was on her second marriage, had four children from her first marriage, and had had her tubes tied.

[2] In 2004, Montgomery started breeding rat terriers for money. She joined a website called *Ratter Chatter* to meet and chat with potential clients. But really, she was looking for pregnant women. In the spring of that same year, she started a conversation with a 23 year old named Bobbie Jo Stinnett. During the conversation, like every conversation on *Ratter Chatter*, Montgomery mentioned that she was pregnant even though she was not pregnant. Bobby Jo Stinnett was eight months pregnant. Montgomery drove to Stinnett's, and when she arrived, Montgomery pounced on the pregnant woman, strangled her, and proceeded to perform a caesarean section on Stinnett (still alive) with a kitchen knife. Montgomery stuck her hand inside the torn womb and pulled out the baby. She left Stinnett on the floor to die, soaped up the baby, stuck her into a Winnie the Pooh onesie, and showed her off at the Whistle Stop Cafe in Melvern. No one in town thought much of it. Montgomery was always saying she was pregnant. The town seemed relieved it had finally happened. When Stinnett's mother came over to find her daughter that afternoon, she thought her stomach had simply exploded.

[3] In October 2005, Clarke filed paperwork in federal court asking that she be added to Lisa Montgomery's defence team. The team already included federal defender David Owen, who had no death-penalty experience, and a local attorney named Susan Hunt, who did but had lost one client to death row. When Clarke showed up with several successful capital cases under her belt, including Ted Kaczynski, Hunt was relieved. At least someone on the defence team knew what they were doing.

[4] Clarke had a system down for everything. There were many rules to follow. Everyone was required to visit the jail and attend the client-attorney meetings in pairs. They didn't wear fancy lawyer clothes or slide a tape recorder across the table. They just sat and talked, and it was never about the trial or the case. It was just about Montgomery's life and getting to know this life. They talked about daily routines. Kids. Husbands. They talked about dogs. Lisa had her rat terriers. Clarke had a schnauzer named Abe. Hunt had a few German shepherds. After each meeting, Clarke recommended everyone jot down their thoughts—anything that impressed them about the meetings. Clarke did this more than anyone—whatever had made an impression. They discussed these thoughts as a group. Then everyone was required to type up a one-page privileged client report. What was their experience of the meeting? The process was drawn out. It took months.



Jared Loughner killed six and shot Congresswoman Gabby Giffords.

[5] Montgomery was a very difficult client. But Clarke was gaining her trust. According to Hunt, Clarke believes that physical contact is sometimes the one gesture that can maintain the trust of a client. Maybe pat them on the back or offer a brief embrace. It's important, too, that the client isn't shackled, handcuffed,or sitting behind a barrier. The whole thing has to be like a coffee date with a friend. Except you're observing everything. When Montgomery spoke, Clarke listened not only to content but to affect, the way Montgomery said things and how her body moved.

[6] One evening, the defence team was having drinks at a local bar and grill when Owen handed Clarke a to-do list. According to Hunt, Clarke baulked and told Owen he didn't have the skills to make a to-do list. She dissed him, told him to give up his position. He had no experience; she would be in charge. Owen never got over the meeting. Next thing you know US district judge Gary Fenner removed Judy Clarke from the team. Three weeks later, Hunt followed.

[7] The trial began in October 2007. Hunt remembers how Montgomery sat at the defence table and was completely subdued, quiet and cold. No emotion. They'd drugged her up, Hunt surmises. Clarke would never have done that. It was a huge mistake—you want the

defendant to appear human, not like a cold-blooded killer.

[8] In April 2008, the jury sentenced Lisa Montgomery to death. Three days before the verdict, David Owen called Susan Hunt. His voice was shaking. "Susan, you were so right," he said. "They never told her story. They should have told her story."

CHAPTER 9

THE narrative of someone's life does not exist for the taking. The client cannot tell you the story. Her family cannot tell you the story. A psychiatrist cannot tell you the story. You have to gather every story and understand them as representations. You must be so thorough as to be able to inhabit the mind of the killer and understand what brought him or her all the way from ordinary to doomed.

[2] Until the '80s, a client's story didn't play a role in federal death penalty cases. People on death row were condemned to a slim version of themselves, defined only by the brutality of their crime. But to bring a pocket of grace to a murderer, you need a narrative.

[3] On January 29, 1998, a bomb hidden beneath a shrub exploded at the New Woman All Women clinic in Birmingham. It was Eric Rudolph's fourth attempted mass killing since detonating a bomb outside the Summer Olympic Games in 1996. Not far away, Bill Bowen, the lawyer who would be asked to represent Rudolph, watched the smoke unfurl over his city.

[4] When Judy Clarke arrived in Birmingham to join the defence team, she immediately revised Bowen's techniques. Bowen met with Rudolph once a week. "Sorry, this isn't enough," she told him. "We need to meet every day." And so Clarke and Bowen met Rudolph every day. They met on Christmas Day and they met on Thanksgiving Day. They met on days when conversations were slow because Rudolph sat in the corner of the room with down-turned eyes. Days when he was acting like a little s**t. It's how it often began—with lies and a refusal to talk secrets.

[5] But Clarke was also buoyed by a chain-smoking mitigation specialist named Scharlette Holdman, whom she'd worked with to develop Kaczynski's defence. Before becoming a hired gun for defence teams facing seemingly unwinnable cases, Holdman had spent a decade befriending, supporting, and finding lawyers for inmates on Florida's death row. While Clarke was drilling into Rudolph—"What songs do you love, Eric? What subjects did you like in school?"—Holdman was doing the same with every member of Rudolph's family and every friend and acquaintance she could find, learning about the abuse he experienced as a child, how his parents' education infected him.

[6] Over the years, Clarke and Holdman have developed a simple technique: become a client's only hope, their last connection to the outside world, then use that relationship to mine every shred of personal information from a client that could be used to show what factors pushed them to transform from people into mass killers. The premise is that there is a spark of humanity in everyone that is ultimately more defining than whatever delusions, depression and negative emotions culminated in the act of murder.



Susan Smith drowned her kids.

[7] "If Judy had her choice, she would have Scharlette on every case," Bowen says. "These women are cut from the same bolt of cloth." And with the exception of Susan Smith, Holdman has served as a mitigator on nearly all of Judy Clarke's celebrity cases—Ted Kaczynski, Eric Rudolph, Jared Loughner and Dzhokhar Tsarnaev. (Though if Scharlette Holdman's on a case, it's usually not on public record at the time.)

[8] At the start of Jared Loughner's investigation, Judy Clarke requested subpoenas for the public-health records of two dozen of Loughner's relatives on his mother's side from as far back as 1893, the year Loughner's maternal great-grandmother was born, and then dispatched Holdman to Judy Wackt's home in Fort Worth, Texas. Wackt is the first cousin of Jared Loughner's mother. Wackt said her oldest aunt suffered from bipolar disorder and was hospitalised for it. The aunt had been healthy for years, and then slipped into a depression.

[9] For Ted Kaczynski, while Clarke was digging deep into Ted's childhood with the help of David and his mother, Wanda, Holdman recruited a team of younger people to learn her trade. She taught them how to research Kaczynski's background in order to retrace the steps that led him to murder. One young woman was dispatched to a remote mountain lake in Montana where Ted and David Kaczynski had once camped, and to other places

that had been dear to Ted. He had called them his "sacred places."

[10] In 2006, Clarke and Holdman taught a seminar on capital defence for the California Public Defenders Association called "The Team Includes Your Client." In the seminar, they listed interview techniques such as "Look for central repeating themes and metaphors in the client's life," "Listen to what lies beneath the client's symptoms," and "Listen to affect rather than content." Their interest lies in the things not said, the silence between sentences, the tiny, often unseen currents that direct a life.

[11] And at the attorney meetings, if Clarke and Holdman found disagreements in how each attorney perceived a defendant's story, they didn't try to resolve these per se, but might use these rifts as a kind of opening or gateway toward individualisation. What appears to be the most opposed might in fact be the most intimately connected. It's F. Scott Fitzgerald's idea that intelligence is the ability to hold two opposing ideas in the mind at the same time. That's what Clarke asks juries to do. These are perverse characters capable of loving acts.



Buford Furrow Jr. shot up a Jewish center.

[12] Rudolph eventually took a plea deal two weeks before trial in which he agreed to tell the FBI everything he knew about other extremist plots in return for life in prison. But Bowen had already come to care for Eric Rudolph. He says that he knew Clarke must have been leading him there, to this straddling point, where on the one hand there's a life on the line, and on the other hand there's the horror this life has perpetrated.

[13] That's what this was about—learning to love people who did terrible things.

CHAPTER 10

SOME former clients feel contentious toward Clarke. Tanh Huu Lam, a Vietnamese accused of murder, writes that Clarke didn't ask him any personal questions, just watched family videos. "She was a very suave lady." But "Ms. Clarke just worried about the reputation of federal defenders." John Lanny Lynch writes, "I'm not sure I can say I ever bonded with Judy." She used to send him postcards from her vacations around the world. But he isn't happy, and he doesn't think she did enough. "My impression is that her life mission is to abolish the death penalty." Lynch told Clarke he sometimes supported the death penalty. She gave him a curious look.

[2] Others clients simply wish to die.

[3] Tsarnaev wrote it on the boat he hid in for 16 hours before his capture: "I ask Allah to make me a *shahied* to allow me to return to him and be among all the righteous people in the highest levels of heaven." Moussaoui begged for a new trial after the jury sentenced him to six life sentences in the Supermax, because he wanted to be executed. Ted Kaczynski tried to commit suicide to escape life and Clarke's strategy. He was not interested in a life sentence if it meant an insanity defence, and that's exactly what Clarke planned to present. The idea humiliated Kaczynski. His work—the philosophical purity and importance of it—would be reduced to nothing but the ramblings of a "sickie." But Clarke was single-minded. Kaczynski was diagnosed as a paranoid schizophrenic—or a "borderline" schizophrenic (the legitimacy of the diagnosis is still under debate)—and this secured him a life sentence in the Supermax. Clarke saved his life at the expense of his dignity. Kaczynski was furious, and remains so.

[4] Clarke's role as a lawyer is to put her clients' wishes and needs ahead of her own agenda. Kaczynski didn't see it happen this way. In the end, she betrayed him, in the same way he felt his brother David had betrayed him when he made the anguished decision to call the FBI.

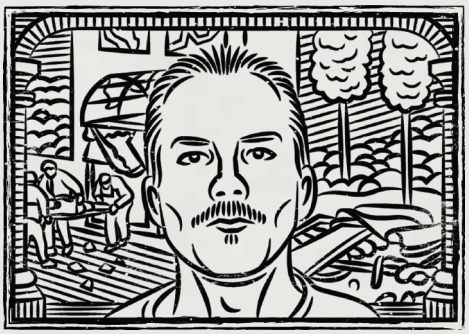
CHAPTER 11

IF anyone knows who Judy Clarke is, they generally assume that she takes on these clients because she is unalterably opposed to the death penalty for its immorality. In actuality, it seems so much more complicated and interesting than that.

[2] Clarke was raised in a conservative family, her mother, Patsy, wrote in a memoir. Not libertarian, let-us-keep-our-money conservative. But capital-*C* conservative. It was church every Sunday, God before country, Jesse Helms conservative. In fact, Jesse Helms, best known for saying things like AIDS is caused by "gay men's deliberate, disgusting, and revolting conduct," was a fixture in her family for a time. Clarke's father worked closely with Helms before he died in a plane crash in 1987. The family mourned their father, but it hit Clarke's brother Mark especially hard. Mark was gay and deeply closeted. And now with his father dead and in an all-knowing place, Mark be-

lieved he would know his darkest secret. "My dad's dead," Mark told his sisters. "Now he knows all about me. And he hates me."

[3] Soon, Jesse Helms would know as well, because Mark would fall ill and die of AIDS in 1994. It took him a year to die and the family watched his body deteriorate. The day before his death, Clarke told her mother, Patsy: "He looked so much better. Really, it's not going to happen yet." Here's what family friend Jesse Helms told Patsy Clarke after Mark's death: "I wish he had not played Russian roulette with his sexual activity."



Eric Rudolph planted five bombs, one at the Atlanta Olympics.

[4] There are moments that define a life. They are the lens through which a person sees the world. And if you were with Judy and Patsy back in 1995, you might have seen the gestation of a worldview. You would have seen Judy tell her mother that what Helms said was wrong. That Mark was much more than his AIDS or his sexuality, and that he deserved more. That Mark having AIDS wasn't a "disgrace" but a "tragedy." You would have seen Judy and her mother not just being angry but channelling that anger, fighting. You'd see them fundraise and form a group to remove Helms from office. You would see them fighting for the person they knew—not a disgusting pervert or an AIDS case.

[5] And if you stuck around, a month later you would have seen Judy step before the jury at the Union County courthouse and ask them to keep their hearts open about another person with a history of demons and dark secrets: Susan Smith, who drowned her children.

CHAPTER 12

IN death-penalty cases, the jury is asked to make a "reasoned moral response" to evidence about the offence and the offender. In federal law, the process involves "weighing" aggravating and mitigating factors. Each juror is permitted to give any mitigating factor whatever weight that juror thinks it deserves. Jurors don't need to come to agreement about what is mitigating and what the mitigators are "worth." A single juror can prevent the unanimous verdict that is necessary to authorise the death penalty.

[2] Now the odd thing: this "reasoned moral response" is given by jurors who already said they were willing to vote for death. Anyone against the death penalty is excluded.

[3] Clarke's task is to create "reasoned moral response." It's not just a recitation of trauma but something more comparable to the work of a novelist. In *Paradise Lost*, the Devil is the most interesting character, famously. It's thought that Dostoyevsky's best work rose from a polemic waged against the hollow characters of Gogol, whose shells he stole and reinhabited from within, allowing the reader to get close enough so that when murder happens, we sympathise, not with the crime, but with the anguish of the character who committed it.



Zacarias Moussaoui was known as the 20th hijacker for his role in 9/11.

[4] Before the surviving victims speak during the penalty phase of Tsarnaev's trial, after which the jury will decide life or death, the prosecution lines up a row of photos before the jury. Lingzi Lu, age 23, is on the left. She has a perpetual smile, as does eight year-old Richard Martin. On the right, 27-year-old Sean Collier looks sharp in a good suit, and Krystle Campbell, aged 29, shows off a white dress. In the middle, between them all, is a lone easel with a black cloth over the top.

[5] The prosecutor is a woman in a purple blazer and white scarf. How terrorism originates, its lineage, doesn't matter, Nadine Pellegrini says. "What matters is that terrorism sang to him!" And here she quotes Ralph Waldo Emerson: "The only person you are destined to become is the person you decide to be," before adding her one twist: "Dzhokhar Tsarnaev was destined to be America's worst nightmare." Then comes the reveal: a closed-circuit photo of Tsarnaev in a courtroom holding cell staring up at a security camera, giving it the middle finger. She calls this Tsarnaev's "message to America."

[6] The average closed-circuit security cam-

era captures 30 frames per second. That single image of Tsarnaev was one of hundreds, thousands of frames that together made up the short film of his life in the holding cell. When Clarke's team shows the jury the rest of the video, the images surrounding that single photo show Tsarnaev fixing his hair and making peace signs with his fingers. What becomes clear once Clarke's team takes the floor is that the camera that recorded that video was encased in a mirror. He might have been giving the finger to his own reflection, to himself.

[7] Clarke humanises the client, but more important, she humanises the jury. She humanised residents of Union, South Carolina, after the Susan Smith trial. "She was one of them," Clarke said. "She was always going to be one of them, and she made a terribly, terribly bad choice. How are you going to kill her?" Nearly 3000 Americans were killed in the attacks of 9/11, and then hundreds of thousands of Afghan and Iraqi civilians were killed next. And we are reminded that Dzhokhar Tsarnaev planted the bombs in retaliation for American-led wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Clarke traces evil directly back to itself. It's childhood trauma, molestation, unrequited love. It's a closed loop. And the death penalty acts as a kind of mirror of society, an America trapped in cycles of vengeance. And so if Ted Kaczynski wants to die, Clarke won't let it happen, because when it comes to death, humanity as an abstraction supercedes the needs of individuals.

[8] Toward the end of the Susan Smith trial, Clarke's team referenced the death of Jesus Christ and offered each member of the jury a stone to throw. "The law does not tell you what to do," Bruck, her co-counsel, told the jury. "It doesn't even give you much of a hint. It leaves it up to you."

[9] Because with that stone, the jury becomes the murderer.

CHAPTER 13

DAVID Kaczynski works at a Tibetan Buddhist monastery near Woodstock, New York. He travels sometimes to his cabin in Texas, the same cabin he built 15 years after his older brother, Ted Kaczynski, built his own cabin in the woods of Montana. The day we spoke there was a man scheduled for execution in Texas, a long-time schizophrenic with multiple hospitalisations who exercised his right to serve as his own attorney. "Judy was a lifesaver for our family," he said. "When I think of Judy, I think of people like him, those who are no longer living because of the death penalty, including Jesus Christ."

[2] When the defence team flew David Kaczynski to Sacramento, California, they asked him to read 20,000 pages of his brother's diaries. Clarke wanted a reality check on Ted's perceptions. David holed up in a hotel room and read 18 hours a day. It took him a week to finish, and as he made his way through the diaries, a window opened into Ted's psyche. There were no monsters coming out of the sky—all his thoughts were oriented toward conventional reality—but this reality had a dark filter over it. David didn't realise how deeply his brother had suffered from loneliness and from a feeling of being unloved. He really just wanted a girlfriend.

CHAPTER 14

DAVID King, a military combat surgeon, says eight-year-old Richard Martin did not die instantly but suffered "a much more primal, very disturbing kind of pain."

[2] The bomb blast knocked Gillian Reny like a softball into her mother. They fell as the smoke settled around them. Reny's tibia snapped in two. Her left leg was torn apart and a piece of muscle flapped over her shredded jeans. Then this army guy showed up and he was trying to get her off the sidewalk.

[3] The prosecution pauses the testimony to play a video. It's from a camera that a man was using to film the runners until he went flying. People keep knocking the camera, moving it around—it's hard to say—but the angle is shifting.

[4] There are wails, small phrases of want—*I can't I can't*—a single drawn-out scream. Blue sky, bones in wet muscle, and there's Reny's blonde hair stiff as a plant in need of water. The camera rolls again and BBs expelled from one of the bombs steam like rabbit s**t in a pool of blood.

[5] The witness, Reny, shakily lifts a cup of water to her mouth. She wipes her eyes until the mascara darkens her skin and makes her blue eyes pop.

[6] The defence acknowledges that the punishment could never be equal to the terrible effects of this crime. "There is no evening of the scales," Bruck says. The story isn't an excuse; the story is the only way to fight off another death.

[7] It begins with a story of exile, when the Tsarnaev family, generations back—long before either brother was born—was banished by Soviets from their homeland in the northern Caucasus and made their way, along with thousands of minorities, across Russia and Central Asia. On a map, they show the routes of suffering the family travelled, until they shift to another much more complicated map of an individual's life, and they keep going, Clarke at Dzhokhar's side, until Tamerlan has images of dead children on his laptop, and until the dead children are real.

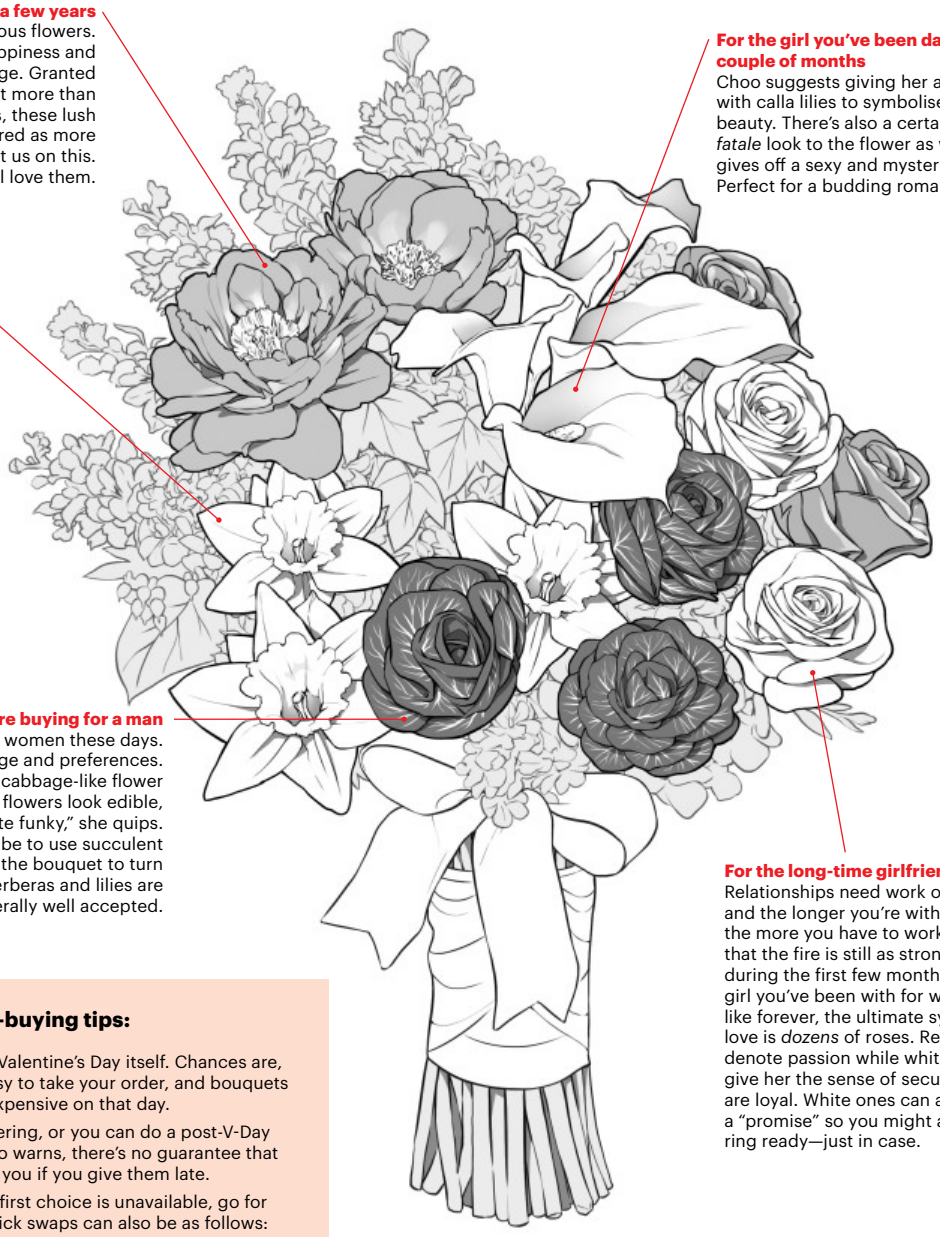
Sort out your flowers

The most popular gift for Valentine's Day is a bouquet of flowers, but picking out which flowers to go into the bouquet can be a bit of a struggle, with way too many choices and each flower having a different meaning (yes, they actually do!). Tips thanks to **Penny Choo** of luxury flower subscription company, **Bloom This**.

For your wife of a few years
Peonies aren't just gorgeous flowers. They are an omen of happiness and prosperity in a marriage. Granted that they do cost a bit more than your average roses, these lush flowers can be considered as more of an investment. Trust us on this. She will love them.

For your wife of over a decade onwards
Just because you've been married for quite a while doesn't mean you're letting go of the romance. Choo suggests giving your lady a bouquet of yellow daffodils to symbolise a renewal of your vows and a promise that you will stay true.

If you're buying for a man
Flowers aren't just for women these days. They transcend gender, age and preferences. For men, Choo opts for a cabbage-like flower called the brassica. "These flowers look edible, not so girly, and are quite funky," she quips. Another option would be to use succulent lavender or add wheat to the bouquet to turn it into a great keepsake. Gerberas and lilies are also generally well accepted.



For the girl you've been dating for a couple of months
Choo suggests giving her a bouquet with calla lilies to symbolise her utmost beauty. There's also a certain *femme fatale* look to the flower as well that gives off a sexy and mysterious vibe. Perfect for a budding romance.

For the long-time girlfriend
Relationships need work over time, and the longer you're with someone, the more you have to work on to prove that the fire is still as strong as it was during the first few months. For that girl you've been with for what seems like forever, the ultimate symbol of love is *dozens* of roses. Red roses denote passion while white ones will give her the sense of security that you are loyal. White ones can also indicate a "promise" so you might as well get a ring ready—just in case.

Three more flower-buying tips:

- Never buy flowers on Valentine's Day itself. Chances are, florists might be too busy to take your order, and bouquets are significantly more expensive on that day.
- Always go for pre-ordering, or you can do a post-V-Day bouquet. However, Choo warns, there's no guarantee that your girlfriend won't kill you if you give them late.
- In the event that your first choice is unavailable, go for her favourite colour. Quick swaps can also be as follows:

Peonies > Garden roses
Roses > Pink lilies
Stargazers > Tulips

WORDS BY CAROL RH MALASIG. ILLUSTRATION BY LIPWEI.

Other people's families

This month, foreign dinner tables, ritual-inspired hostility, someone else's toddler, someone else's dad, and someone else's nana.



THREE ESSENTIAL THINGS: Learn the drinking culture. Quickly. Compliment the food. Not too vigorously. Help with the dishes. Always. And especially if there's no dishwasher.

Beyond that: other people's families are interesting, and odds are they're interested in you, too, even if that joke didn't work just then. You're an ally of someone they love.

Sure, defer at first—but not so much that you project discomfort or indecision. Stall briefly as others approach the dinner table so that they can find their chairs. And when your friend or partner gets dragged into another room, another conversation, make your first assertive move. Find a potential buddy. If old men are your demographic, seek out Grandpa. If a four-year-old starts tugging on your arm, race him to his Lego castle.

Remember, your otherness is also an asset. You haven't seen Uncle Mark's imitation of Hillary and Bill Clinton ordering bolognese, which was funny the first time—this time, for you. You want to hear about Mum's late-life hobbies and the "deeply, deeply insightful" comment her friend Diane made at her book club. You don't have hide-and-seek or peekaboo fatigue. Be weary only of the semi-marginalised pedantic cousin. Unless you like getting a lecture on the influences of Louis XIV-era gardens. In which case, God bless. Pull him into a side conversation and you've basically fallen on a grenade—which, we might note, is French for grenade.

Still, don't be too selfless. Hosts notice quiet suffering. Take a walk when you need a minute to yourself. If they don't have something you need (probably contact solution), just go out and get it yourself. No hubbub necessary. And ask for an extra blanket if you're shivering—the worst that could happen is you catch a cold. Hopefully.

The endorsement: flirting with grandma

Be she a matriarch with a perm or a mouse with a corner chair, tend to her. Refill her beverage. Wait for her as people travel—even if it's just to the other room. Ask her about her life, what's changed, how she snuck out to meet boys back when. She may laugh at your curiosity; don't yield. Welcome her winks. Delight in her cusses. Her stories best the repeated "So, what do you do?" you'll suffer with the others. You'll gain an ally in mischief and gossip, blessings from the (mistaken) rest for entertaining her, and, with luck, a kiss on the cheek when you say goodbye.

Thank-you gifts in descending order of appropriateness:

- **Bottle of wine**
- **Bottle of olive oil**
- **Bottle of canola oil**
- **Bottle of baby oil**

Regarding arguments

To which you do not belong.

They may not argue like your family does. Yours may withhold or concede while theirs may attack—or vice versa. Both scenarios can be discomfiting, but neither is intrinsically problematic. The real issue, according to Dawn Braithwaite, chair of the University of Nebraska–Lincoln communication-studies department and an award-winning expert in familial conversation, is when the argument becomes actually hostile (which often happens at family rituals—like, say, the annual holiday dinner—where emotions rise higher than normal).

If it's bad, try to leave. If you can't leave, remain silent. Don't jump into a situation that doesn't involve you. That may alienate everyone. But if you're recruited—especially by an opponent of your inviter (your only true ally here)—avoid opining. State the facts: this seems really important to you all. But I feel uncomfortable getting involved. Repeat if necessary.

Should the argument reach a point where you want to protect the person who brought you, remain restrained but also abandon honouring the conflict: okay, that's enough. Stop.

Visual Rule: meeting "Dad"



Always



Sometimes



Never

Elotes: The street-style corn

Up the ante on your game-day snacking with these babies. Or your next barbecue. Your guests won't see this coming. Unless they read us, of course. Jason Jones, Super Loco's Culinary Director, shows how.

Recipe

Ingredients

- Corn in husk
- Chipotle chillies
- Mayonnaise
- Grated Parmesan or Cotija cheese
- Chilli flakes
- Limes



Instructions

1. Steam or boil corn in husk.
2. Peel away the husk. It comes off easily by boiling, but if you steam it, you can save them to wrap your fish or meats to make tamales with for the barbecue. Gives it a nice flavour.
3. Skewer the corn.
4. Barbecue or chargrill the skewered corn. Or char the outside over a gas stove like roasting peppers.
5. Blend the chipotle chillies and mix with mayo to your liking.
6. Brush corn with mayo mix.
7. Roll in grated Parmesan. Cotija cheese if you can.
8. Sprinkle with chilli flakes.
9. Serve with wedge of lime.

Before you buy/build/try

What you need to know about…





Saunas

Why: The dry heat. A sauna typically hits temps of around 85°C.

Why not: They can be unsafe for people with poorly controlled blood pressure or heart issues, such as abnormal rhythms, unstable angina or valve disease. Start slowly, with just five minutes in the heat, and add a minute each session to work up your schvitz time gradually, thereby lowering your risk of passing out.

What to buy: The newest saunas use infrared technology to heat the space. A reputable brand is JNH Lifestyles; its infrared saunas feature carbon-fibre heaters, chemical-free Canadian hemlock wood, digital temperature controls and built-in speakers.

Hot tubs

Why: Extremely relaxing. And because bubbles are fun.

Why not: They require some upkeep—brushing the tub weekly to prevent dirt and algae buildup; cleaning the filters; and draining, scrubbing and refilling the tub every one to three months.

What to buy: Some of the best tubs are made by Hot Spring Spas, which offers features like a saltwater sanitising system and jets that can move up and down your back. Consider the above-ground options, since inground tubs typically cost USD15,000 to USD20,000 and require professional installation—think site excavation, plumbing, electrical work, and sometimes a gas hookup.

Umbrellas

What the best ones have that the others don't.

1. More ribs
Whereas average umbrellas have six or eight ribs, the best-performing models have nine, making them less likely to be blown inside out.

2. Fewer folds in the ribs
The ribs are composed of three segments in most folding umbrellas; supersmall folding-umbrella ribs can require four or five segments, upping the chance they'll break and render the whole thing useless (or poke you in the eye).

3. Solid rivets
Rivets hold together the joints where the ribs bend—solid stainless-steel rivets are more durable for years of opening and closing than hollow rivets that you can see through.

4. Tougher frames
Most are made from aluminium in China; you want fibreglass, which is more durable.

5. Domed shape
A deep canopy (the part that covers you) is crucial to keeping you dry, and a dome works better than a shallow, flatter canopy or a circus-tent-shaped one.

6. Water-resistant coating
A Teflon-coated polyester canopy fabric means water beads up, so it won't soak through. It also lets you shake off all the water before heading inside.

7. Vents
Vented umbrellas let the wind pass through slits so your umbrella won't flip inside out.

8. Warranty
Some companies include a warranty that protects you not just from defects, but also from wear and tear for years.

STREET-STYLE CORN: WORDS BY LESTARI HAIRUL, ILLUSTRATION BY YOHEI YAMAGUCHI.
ILLUSTRATIONS BY PETER OUMANSKI.

Theatres of warmth

The overly simplistic guide to warm-weather escapes.



Southeast Asia

Hot destinations:
If you're a fan of cities, hit Bangkok, Ho Chi Minh City, Singapore or Jakarta. If you prefer more laid-back travel, stop in Chiang Mai, Thailand; Mandalay, Myanmar; Luang Prabang, Laos; or Yogyakarta, Indonesia.

Where to stay:
Southeast Asia does luxury better than perhaps anywhere else in the world—try the Four Seasons Chiang Mai; swim in the infinity pool at the Marina Bay Sands in Singapore; or go for colonial throwback Nam Hai Hotel in Hoi An, Vietnam.

What to do:
Most travellers to Indonesia who want the beach head to Bali. Instead, take a flight, then a ferry, and finally a speedboat to one of the Raja Ampat (Four Kings) Islands. If you're going to Thailand, arrange to be there for Loi Krathong, the beautiful floating-light festival in November.

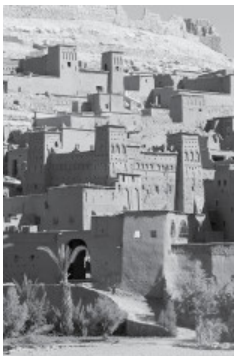


South America

Hot destinations:
São Paulo for culture; Rio de Janeiro for beaches; Buenos Aires, Santiago de Chile, Medellín and Cuzco, Peru, for everything.

Where to stay:
Hotel Aranwa Cusco Boutique in Peru or the beachside Fasano Rio de Janeiro in Brazil.

What to do:
There's Peru's Machu Picchu, of course, but you also won't want to miss Chile's Atacama Desert, Iguazu Falls (between Argentina and Brazil), and Brazil's coastal sand dunes, the Lençóis Maranhenses.

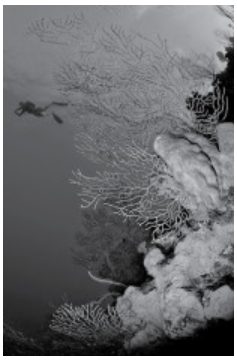


North Africa

Hot destinations:
Moroccan destinations like Marrakech and Fez, as well as the coastal city of Essaouira. (Given the overall instability of the region, best to steer clear of Libya, Algeria and Tunisia.)

Where to stay:
In Marrakech, you can go classic Four Seasons or 14th-century inspired Ksar Char-Bagh; if you go to Egypt, sleep right along the Nile at the Sofitel Winter Palace Luxor.

What to do:
Make your way to Merzouga, in the Moroccan Sahara, and take a camel safari into the desert. Accommodations are basic, but you can wake up to sunrise over the sand dunes.



Caribbean

Hot destinations:
Turks and Caicos, the Cayman Islands.

Where to stay:
The Gansevoort Turks + Caicos is a sleek oceanfront hotel that feels like Manhattan on the beach (and you won't be surrounded by old men in Hawaiian shirts). Kimpton's first Caribbean property will open in the Cayman Islands this year. It's gonna be a beauty.

What to do:
In Turks, go snorkelling and pick up conch shells from the ocean floor to make into conch *ceviche*. In the Caymans, charter a private boat to visit Stingray City. Wild stingrays congregate here, making it one of the world's most unique snorkel sites. Hit Grand Cayman in early May for Batabano, the island's own one-day version of Carnival, with parades, skimpy costumes, twerking, etc.; recover on one of the quieter sister islands, Little Cayman or Cayman Brac.



Florida

Hot destinations: Miami—but for its wildlife, not its wild nightlife.

Where to stay:
The classic Fontainebleau, a '50s architectural marvel on 20 acres of pristine coastline; it's also got a 3,700SQM spa.

What to do:
Spend the day at the beach, and/or head to Little Havana to eat at Versailles, home to a deservedly world-famous Cuban sandwich. (José Andrés is a fan.) Then bike through Everglades National Park to burn it off (much quieter than an airboat). Pedal the 24KM paved Shark Valley loop, where alligators often line the path.



The go bag

Gather the below. Pack them in the bag at left. Keep it all handy in case you need to make a break for a three-day vacation.

For day

- Four T-shirts
- Two polo shirts
- One pair khaki shorts
- Two pairs swim trunks
- One pair flip-flops
- One pair sneakers (for long walks and/or hiking)
- One pair sunglasses you wouldn't hugely mind losing
- One good book (no longer than 400 pages)

For night

- One pair khakis
- One crumpled-cotton unlined blazer
- Two dress shirts
- One pair loafers
- Toothbrush, toothpaste

Optional

- Workout gear
- Dress socks
- Sunscreen

WITH THANKS TO TRAVEL BLOGGERS ROBERT SCHRADER OF LEAVE YOUR DAILY HELL AND ALEXANDRA BAACKES OF ALEX IN WANDERLAND.



TAG HEUER CARRERA CALIBRE HEUER 01

Chris Hemsworth works hard and chooses his roles carefully. He handles pressure by taming it, and turning it to his advantage. #DontCrackUnderPressure was coined with him in mind.

BROOKLYN IS BURNING



In the blazing borough of New York, streets of red set the stage for the Spring/ Summer collections. It's time to turn on the heat.

Photography by Vincent Paul Yong

Styling by Ian Loh

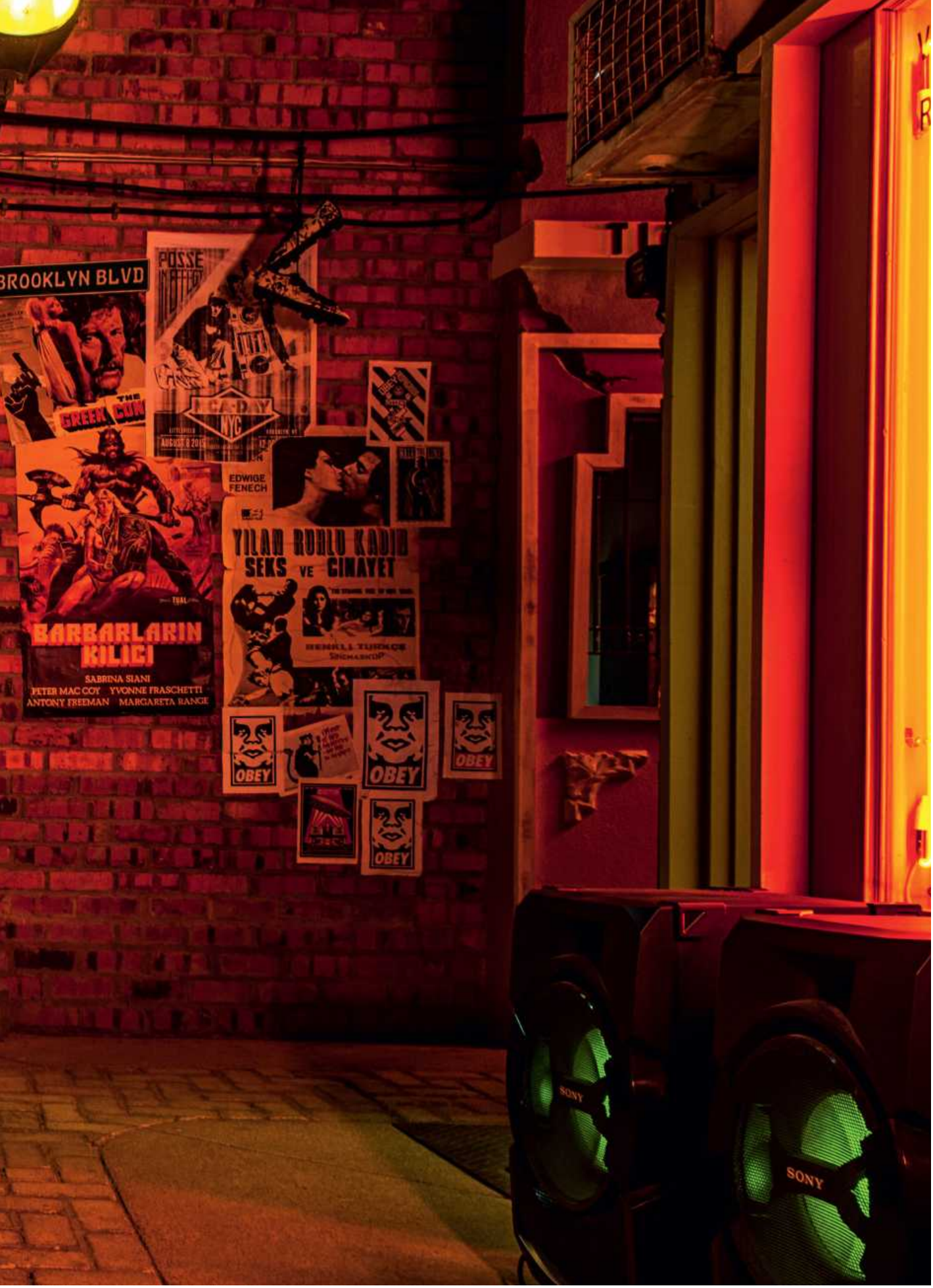
Art direction by Rebecca Chew

Shoes by **Gucci**.



BOTTEGA VENETA

Anorak in dark pacific russet sergeant cupro; sweatpants in vesuvio viscose fleece and haze suede, chenille borders and sneakers in multicolor suede and technical fabric with intreccaitao calf detail, all by **Bottega Veneta**.


BROOKLYN BLVD
THE GREEN GUN
POSSE
EDWIGE FENECH
YILAN ROHLU KADIN
SEKS VE CINAYET
BARBARLARIN KILICI
SABRINA SIANI
PETER MAC COY YVONNE FRASCHETTI
ANTONY FREEMAN MARGARETA RANGE
OBEY
OBEY
OBEY
SONY
SONY



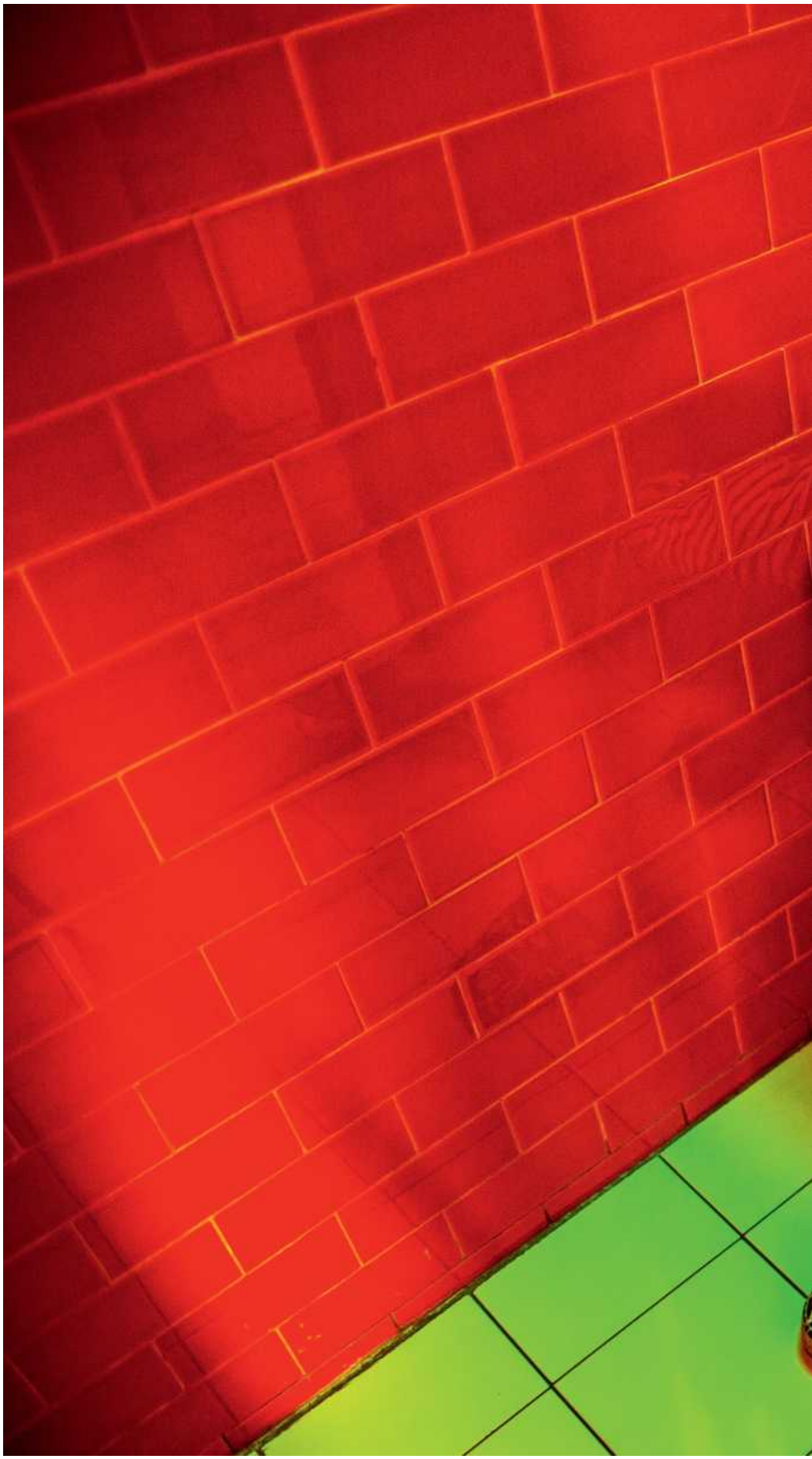
GUCCI

Azure lurex plain knit crewneck and brackish-margarine cotton drill five-pocket short flare with embroidery details, both by **Gucci**.



COACH

Leather patched zip racer jacket and mohair banded crewneck, both by **Coach**.



DOLCE & GABBANA

Silk striped pullover, silk shorts and espadrilles, all by **Dolce & Gabanna**.







VERSACE

(Left) Leather jacket and top, both by **Versace**.

(This page) Jacket, top, trousers and sandals, all by **Versace**.



DUNHILL

Striped cotton extra-long casual shirt and linen chino casual trousers, both by **Dunhill**.

HAIR BY CHIAKI SABATA. MAKE-UP BY SHAWN GOH. STYLIST ASSISTED BY ALAA LOLLY MAMDOUH AND SARAH CHONG. MODEL: SEBASTIAN B./WU MODELS. LOCATION: RED ROOM, TREC KL. SPECIAL THANKS TO ANA LUCIA AND AMIR MOJII.

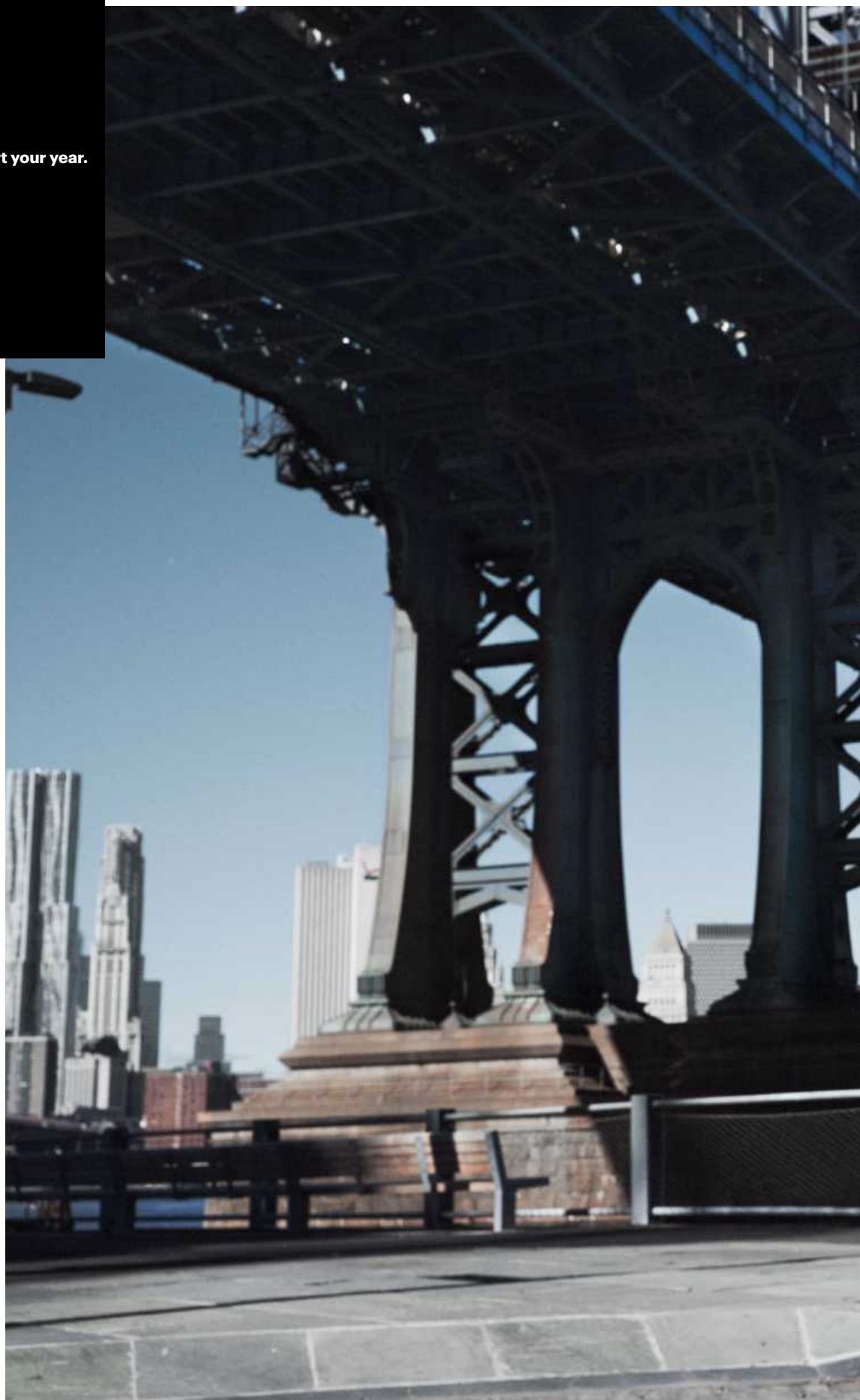


MAN ABOUT TOWN

Easy layers to kick-start your year.

Photographs by
Caleb and Gladys @ Wilhelmina Artists

Styling by
Juliana Gimenez





Wool, mohair and silk-blend blazer and leather belt, both by **Tom Ford**; T-shirt by **John Varvatos**; cotton denim jeans by **Adriano Goldschmied**.

Nylon bomber jacket by **John Elliot**; cashmere sweater by **Canali**.





Cotton trench coat by **Acne Studios**; cotton knit button-front shirt and silk T-shirt, both by **Burberry**; cotton denim jeans by **Adriano Goldschmied**.



Cotton jacket by **John Varvatos**; wool pullover by **John Elliot**; cotton denim jeans by **Prada**.



Cotton tuxedo jacket by **Dolce & Gabbana**; wool sweater by **Woolrich**; cotton trousers by **Burberry**; leather shoes by **Dolce & Gabbana**.

Faux leather jacket by **Prada**; wool shirt by **Woolrich**; cotton jeans by **Seven For All Mankind**.



MODEL JARROD SCOTT FROM FORD MODELS.
STYLIST ASSISTED BY CLAIRE SALOMON AND VILDE EUGENIE LIVERUD.



Wool mohair jacket by **Bottega Veneta**; cotton T-shirt by **Pal Zileri**; cotton denim jeans by **Adriano Goldschmied**.

HAIR BY TY SHEARN.
MAKE-UP BY NIGEL STANISLAUS AT ART MIX CREATIVE NYC.

VICTORIOUS ELEMENTS



Our Best Dressed Real Man winner Joshua Fitton shows us his must-have items to put on, right before stepping out to face the day.

Photography by **Delvin Xian**



Icon fragrance and shaving gel by **Dunhill**; eyewear by **Calvin Klein Platinum**.

Work: 2016

How to look like you know what you're doing in any office—even one with a Ping-Pong table.

ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW about what to wear today to wherever you work is in that shoe. Or, okay, sneaker—which you've probably seen more and more of recently, and not just on weekends. And yes, this particular sneaker is untraditional work footwear: suede instead of smooth leather, neither brown nor black. Yet it is also traditional: streamlined and simple, with an understated tone.

What this means is that it is, in many ways, just like a suit, existing at the very nexus of the new workplace power structures: part Wall Street upstart, part dot-com tycoon. And any man working in 2016, no matter where he is, may need to impress both in a single day.

Exciting times, right? Next slide, please…

1. Suede sneakers (RM600*) by **Tommy Hilfiger**.
2. Cotton chinos (RM900*) by **AG**.
3. Cotton-blend socks (RM50*) by **Richer Poorer**.



*DENOTES TRANSLATED PRICES.

This is the new power suit

And it's not even technically a suit.

THERE ONCE WAS A POWER-SUIT archetype that lasted way too long. It had hard lines with rigid structure. The navy blues and greys shined, as did the silk ties. And since powerful men wore it, it became a symbol of power itself, even if the too-wide shoulders slouched.

Today, circumstances may at times require a classic suit, but daily confidence doesn't require those tired hallmarks. It demands instead an examination of how close you want to stand to tradition. The outfit to the right is an example of what can be done now. We'll break it down.

1. Two-button cotton-and-linen jacket (RM5,000*) by **L.B.M. 1911**.
2. Cotton T-shirt (RM280*) by **AG**.
3. Cotton trousers (RM985*) by **MAC Jeans**.
4. Suede boots (RM660*) by **Aldo**.
5. Leather belt (RM1,570*) by **Ermenegildo Zegna**.
6. Leather briefcase (RM4,800*) by **Ernest Alexander**.



Yep, that's a T-shirt
The rule has been that a dress shirt—with a tie or a few buttons undone—is the shirt that exudes the most power. But opposing the powerful is power, too. Thus the T-shirt: it's so far from the old style that you cannot wear it with a traditional suit jacket (particularly one with some sheen). Instead, find a jacket with texture and heft.

Consider brown...
It's the halfway point between time immemorial (navy and grey) and Technicolour.

...And this blue
Wearing only earth tones can make someone look like an earth-science teacher. If that's your target, fine. But don't rule out a sea tone. The brightness and contrast will punch up everything else, like a cool splash of—okay, you get it.

Tucked? untucked?
You definitely do not want an oversized T-shirt under a jacket, let alone one that hangs below the bottom. But, assuming it's the proper length (i.e. just enough to tuck), don't stress about it.

That bag is smart
See that L-shaped pocket? For your ideas notepad? Someone really considered it: the shape, how it's placed. Owning considered things makes you look considerable.

The sly chinos
Every outfit should deliver a subtle eff-you. Like these chinos: classic, but an understated printed pattern on the surface adds a bit of daring the guy next to you doesn't have.

Close with a hybrid
Suede is sophistication (upkeep required); boots are rugged. Rugged sophistication: if that doesn't come off as bold, poised and compelling, nothing will.

Look at all these great trousers

Our favourite pairs, arranged for you.

WE'RE GOING TO MAKE A GUESS: you wear three different kinds of trousers to work. You wear suit trousers. You wear tan chinos. You wear blue jeans. That is your range. And maybe that's all you need. It does the trick for a lot of people, and if you're one of them, stick to the left side of the chart below, with the neutral colours and vertical-slit pockets. But if you've grown tired of doing what's good—what's okay—there are as many great alternatives as ever. Consider five pockets, maroons and stripes, white corduroys, even drawstring waists—an entire spectrum ready to be explored, for those willing to stand apart.

Tip

If your stomach is growing, look sideways in a mirror to see if your trousers dip in front. You want a straight line around your body. If they dip, find a pair with a higher rise (so, not low-rise), go up a size and belt them higher.



1. Cotton chinos (RM700*) by **Gant Originals**.
2. Cotton chinos (RM260*) by **Gap**.
3. Cotton chinos (RM740*) by **Ted Baker**.
4. Cotton trousers (RM985*) by **MAC Jeans**.
5. Cotton trousers (RM870*) by **Levi's Vintage Clothing**.
6. Cotton corduroy trousers (RM560) by **Nautica**.
7. Wool-blend trousers (RM1,300*) by **Baldwin**.
8. Virgin-wool-blend trousers (RM985*) by **Theory**.
9. Cotton trousers (RM960*) by **Freemans Sporting Club**.

The Oh, F**k, I need a suit guide to buying a suit quick

WE GET IT. Something "just came up." You "had no idea." It is "totally out of the ordinary," a "complete surprise." There is no time to regret being unprepared by not owning a suit, if only as a backup plan. These things happen—a ceremony in a few months at which you might very well be honoured for what you did, or a face-to-face meeting (finally) with the big prospective client in just a week, or an interview for "well, how about tomorrow?"—and you've got to scramble. Here are your options for what to do next.



F**K, I'VE GOT A COUPLE MONTHS

TRY: INTERNET BESPOKE. Several online services offer custom suiting. But be wary of any that require you to measure yourself. You likely don't know how (especially shoulder measurements, the most important). Look to J. Hilburn (custom suits start at RM2,605*), which sends a consultant to you. He measures you and gives you fabric and colour and other customisation options (the lead time enables greater ambition). Then, in a month or so, the suit arrives at your doorstep.



F**K, I'VE GOT A DAY

TRY: OVERNIGHTING IT. Assuming you have zero time—not even enough to run to a store—you're just going to have to buy something that fits well out of the box. Turn to Suitsupply (suits start at RM1,750*). It offers all the customary services (in-store tailoring, additional customisation) in several cities, but its staple suits come in a variety of fits and fabrics, like this pure-wool option. If you order one online by three in the afternoon, you'll get it the next day.



F**K, I'VE GOT A WEEK

TRY: BRICK AND MORTAR. Head to Men's Wearhouse and seek out a suit by Joseph Abboud (suits start at RM3,000*). It should fit pretty well (focus on the shoulders bending where yours do), but have an in-house tailor hem or cuff the pants and maybe, take in the jacket. Those alterations should take almost no time. More difficult ones—shortening sleeves, tapering pant legs—take a few days. If they're needed, see how quickly they can be done.

What's the best work bag?

In an age when most documents can live on your phone, we asked five of the top minds in men's clothing what we should carry around. They disagreed.

Michael Williams
Cofounder, Paul + Williams; proprietor, A Continuous Lean

There's no silver bullet, but a leather or canvas briefcase with a shoulder strap is manoeuverable and gets better over time. Like my Filson: RM1,160* for a bag that will easily last 30 years.

In my bag: My Fujifilm X-E2 camera.

Josh Peskowitz
Men's fashion director, Bloomingdale's

I don't like to carry a bag. I've found that a leather portfolio is the most elegant way to carry around workplace essentials—I'm never going back.

In my bag: A Smythson pocket-sized notebook.

Bruce Pask
Men's fashion director, Bergdorf Goodman

I stand by my belief in having two bags in rotation: one that's more accommodating for your commute, like a soft-sided briefcase or a leather or canvas backpack. The second—a leather portfolio or envelope—stays in the office and travels to different meetings. It may sound like it's complicating things, but I say it provides a greater clarity of purpose for each.

In my bag: A small lined Moleskine notebook.

Morgan Collett
Cofounder, Saturdays NYC

I leave at 7:30 and get back at 7:30. Between, I've got meetings, appointments, boxing—so I like a roomy but sleek mix of a tote, duffel, and backpack, like the square-bottom one we just made with Porter by Yoshida & Co.

In my bag: Boxing gloves, a mouth guard.

Eric Jennings
Vice-president & fashion director of menswear, Saks Fifth Avenue

An elegantly constructed all-leather backpack. Today, we all need to keep our hands free as we travel so that we can communicate on our mobile devices. Plus, a backpack balances the weight across both sides of your body.

In my bag: Blotting paper.



ESQUIRE'S PICKS
1. Leather tote (RM1,970*) by **Coach**.
2. Calfskin backpack (RM2,400*) by **Piquadro**.
3. Cotton-twill-and-leather briefcase (RM1,030*) by **Filson**.

ASK NICK SULLIVAN

The fashion director of Esquire US will now take your questions.

A lot of dress shirts are now made to be worn untucked. Can they be worn untucked with a blazer?

An untucked shirt always looks slovely—like a 14-year-old student in detention at an upscale East Coast prep school—and this is only exaggerated when you put a blazer over it. The gap is just far too wide. Even in a casual-dress office, it's important not to overstep the mark. Would you wear jogging pants? Pyjama bottoms? No.

Is it ever appropriate to criticise a male coworker's attire?

If I was the boss and he was totally letting the office down, it would be in my interest to do so. If a coworker is a good friend and is letting himself down, I would say yes, at a push—it's in his interest. But given that even the most laid-back office can be a hotbed of politics, backstabbing, and intrigue, I'd steer clear of criticising an equal altogether. That would be in nobody's interest.







Small steps, huge styles

Givenchy launches the Micro Jacquard Capsule by Riccardo Tisci.

Since his appointment seven years ago, Riccardo Tisci has given the Givenchy man a makeover with trademark stars, Rottweilers, traditional African imagery and tech prints. For this capsule collection, he takes things in a different direction by swapping his iconic prints for jacquard motifs. The four-piece collection—in the Givenchy signature colours of black, white and red—comprises a reversible bomber jacket, a suit with matching tie made of jacquard wool, a cotton shirt and a polo shirt. In essence, these modern must-haves will take you from day to night in Tisci-approved style. *givenchy.com*



Get lucky

Rock Levi's denim this Chinese New Year.

To get you in the mood for Chinese New Year (as if the songs on an endless loop in shopping malls aren't enough) is Levi's new festive collection. The campaign captures the spirit of the brand with a series of visuals inspired by traditional Chinese idioms. The collection includes the classic five-pocket jean with bandana motif on the inner seam, trucker jackets with hints of red and simple tops for easy pairing. Whatever you do, remember to see red for a smooth sailing year ahead. *levis.com.my*



Perfect 10

Dior Homme releases an exclusive clutch.

To commemorate the opening of Dior Homme's first store in Malaysia, the French label has released 10 limited edition bi-colour clutches. The understated leather accessory is numbered on the mirrored nametag. Needless to say, it's a handsome specimen—highly recommended for anyone who yearns for something analogue in this Instagram-savvy age.
Dior Homme Suria KLCC Boutique, Shop 129-130, 1st Floor, Suria KLCC.

WORDS BY SARAH CHONG AND IAN LOH.

Spring sneak peek

Here's a quick Esquire guide to two new collections ahead of next month's grand spring issue.



GUCCI:
MILAN, JUNE 2015
SINGAPORE, DECEMBER 2015

NEW FEELINGS

The keyword for the SS16 Gucci show, *détournement* (or recontextualisation), is exactly what Alessandro Michele has been doing to the Italian label for the past two seasons (three, if you count the Cruise collection) since taking the helm as Creative Director. It's not an easy notion to understand, but Michele has created clothes that are so easy to fall for.

It is obvious the designer is obsessed with all things vintage—the '70s in particular. Lace shirts, frilly collars and pussy-bow blouses over flared trousers all echo vintage Bowie androgyny. Also seen on the runway: a flesh-toned lace shirt with embroidered roses, a pale blue leather biker jacket with studs, flowers and birds, and a green silk robe with fur cuffs. Subtlety is definitely not Michele's strong suit. But the lavish embroidery and painted florals certainly speak of a new level of artisanship.

Michele hasn't thrown out everything that we know (and love) about Gucci. He has tweaked the logo with a softer hand and updated the iconic horsebit loafer with exotic materials. It's not a collection which strikes you immediately as "wearable", and whether or not you're on board with Michele's *détournement* direction, Gucci is settling into a new aesthetic, a new way of beauty, and a blossoming idea of gender fluidity.

1. The look we're looking at
A suede coat over checked pants. We love the Helmut Berger flair.

2. Green with envy
This season, the iconic horsebit loafer comes in lush green eel leather.

3. Shop 'til you drop
The XL shopper is large enough for a day trip or a week of groceries.





LOUIS VUITTON:
PARIS, JUNE 2015
SINGAPORE, DECEMBER 2015

LOOK EAST

Kim Jones has a well-documented fascination with Asian culture. His previous SS15 collection was largely inspired by Rajasthan, the land of kings in the northwestern corner of India. This time round, he's decided to take us on a tour of the Far East with vivid embroidery and prints of cranes and monkeys. These can be seen on key items of the collection anchored to the theme of American '50s sportswear, from a Hawaiian bowling shirt to satin gym shorts. And you should expect nothing less from the King of Sportswear.

1. Clash of cultures
Embroidered cranes on a grey and pearl satin silk bomber jacket, paired with a grey satin silk shirt and a pair of cream slim trousers—posh and oh-so-polished.

2. Stylish strap-on
Glammed-up gym sandals in suede with Velcro fastenings are just about as comfortable as it gets, especially when they come with heavy-duty sneakers soles.

3. Luxe gym gear
Have you ever wished that your gym rucksack were a lot less blah? This well-proportioned example with the LV monogram is one to certainly whet your appetite.







Synth pop

With the rainy season upon us again, you'll do well to consider a lightweight, water-resistant fabric like nylon. Keep it fresh with bold colours and you're set, no matter the weather.



Nylon jacket by **Burberry**.

Nylon board shorts by **Louis Vuitton**.

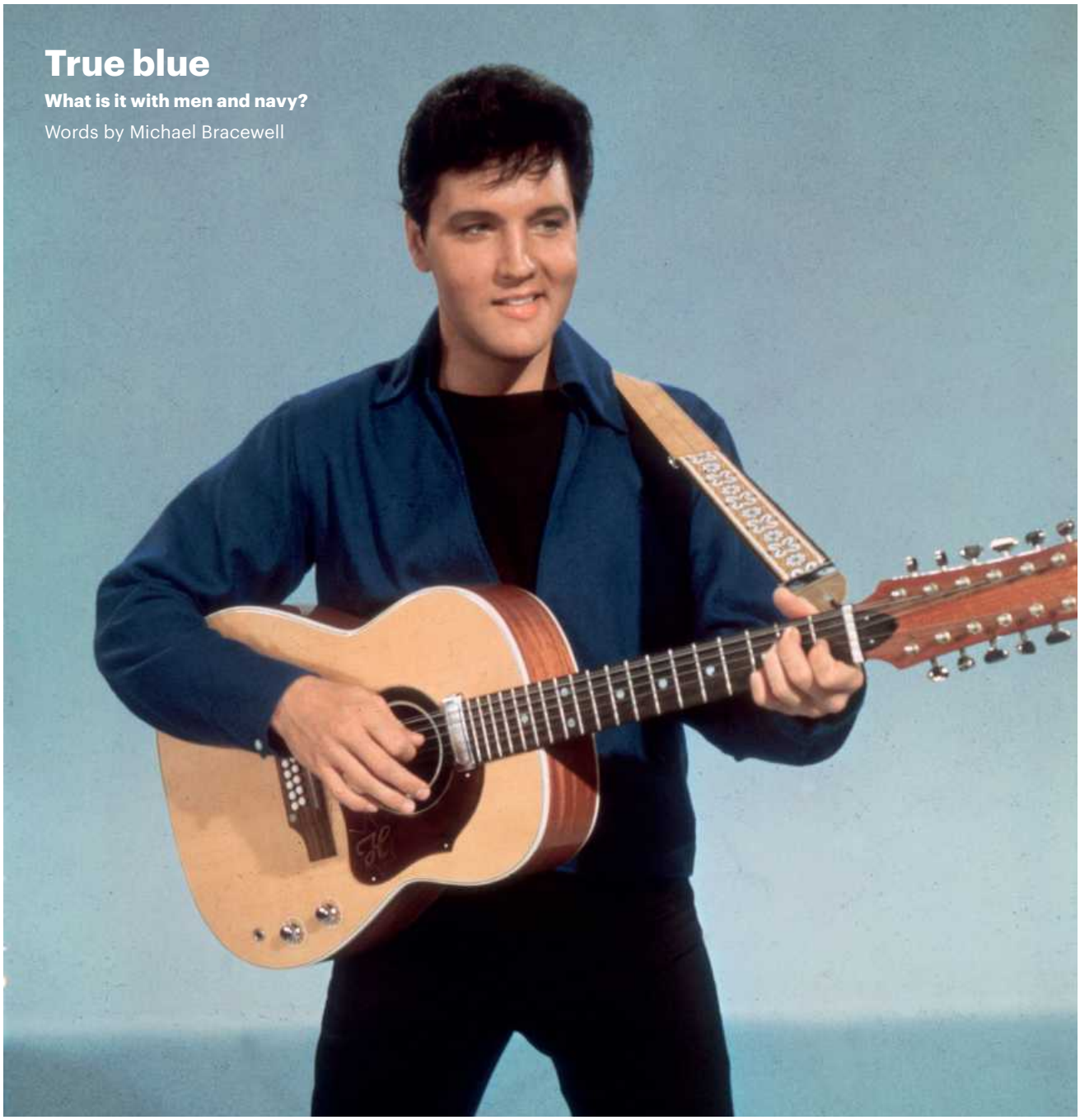
Nylon backpack with leather trim by **Prada**.

PHOTOGRAPH BY RAYMOND LEE AT CAPSULE PRODUCTIONS.
STYLING BY LIM SIU FANG. WORDS BY JANIE CAI.

True blue

What is it with men and navy?

Words by Michael Bracewell



ONE OF THE GENTLEMEN accredited with conceiving dandyism, George "Beau" Brummel (who took the view that a pair of boots were best polished with champagne), made a famous remark that I have been turning over in my mind for some years. "If people turn to look at you in the street," he pronounced, "you are not well dressed, but either too stiff, too tight, or too fashionable."

It is interesting to remember at this point that the word "glamour" derives from an Old English word meaning "magic". One extrapolation of Brummel's insight is the pleasingly magical notion that the ultimate expression of dandyism is in fact a form of invisibility: that one might be so correctly dressed as to attract no attention whatsoever. Such a conclusion would certainly suit a dandy's fondness for paradox: that the supreme sartorial achievement is a disappearing act—the point at which a perfectly dressed gentleman's clothing becomes an invisibility cloak.

Over the years, while pondering life's many mysteries, I have pursued this thought a little further in terms of concept, at least. Might the sartorial attainment of invisibility—taking Brummel's point, and (to borrow from Quentin Crisp) "doing it like mad"—explain the relationship in fiction and popular culture between secret agents and their appearance, more specifically their suits? For

clearly the secret agent of popular culture is seldom too distant from dandyism. It has become a near truism, in the lovely world of spy thrillers, for the British agent to straighten his tie having socked a Soviet thug. Sooner or later, he is bound to have his boots polished with champagne.

These agents even have a literary and artistic equivalent in those authors and artists—spies too, in their own ways, on the workings and secrets of the world—who adopt extreme sartorial correctness as a form of disguise, ceremonial mask or transformative garment: the patrician dandyism of William S Burroughs, for example (hair flattened with water, side-parted, dark three-piece suit, cigarette held at chest height, thumb of free hand tucked in waistcoat pocket); or the eternal "responsibility suits" (their term) worn by the artists Gilbert & George; or the Southern dandy white suits of Tom Wolfe. Whether true (and especially so if not), I cherish the rumour that when asked about his iconic white suits, Wolfe replied that he wore them "to reflect his critics back to themselves". Take that, *New Yorker*!

All of the above, however, when returned to the world of the common man, seems to beg an abbreviated, off-the-peg version. How might the average chap in the street acquire a look that is at once quietly gentlemanly, always modern (vitally), correct in every detail, and achieves the supreme balancing act of being flawlessly elegant yet making no "statement" (for what could be more gauche, for a gentleman, than "making a statement")? In short, how might a well-dressed man attain all of these things, to the point of being usefully, even glamorously, invisible—and particularly so, once 40 winters hath besieged his brow, and, more often than not, brought with them an advancing waist measurement? The tried and tested answer, here formalised, is simplicity itself: he must start to wear navy coloured clothes at every possible opportunity.

I learned this lesson nearly 40 years ago, when one autumn morning towards the end of the '70s, I took myself off to a jumble sale (in those days, still common) that was being held in a suburban church hall behind a wall encrusted with oyster-coloured flints. Such events were hugely popular with the (very small) local group of would-be post-punks and their predominantly art-school girlfriends.

In a manner inconceivable today, with the advent of the loathsome "vintage" tag, lazily employed to describe pretty much anything, one could still find amid the musty, moth-balled, morbid heaps, and the ancient biscuit tins filled with stray buttons and spare zips (more than one of which I had seen put to new use in the back of a plastic skirt), clothing (from gauzy blouses to lead-heavy overcoats), costume jewellery, sunglasses, cigarette cases and so forth dating from the '20s or even earlier. And these cheap treasures played a huge part in the invention of the post-punk, proto-new romantic street style. This was a time, after



Left and previous page
"Poised between gravitas, sobriety, formality, maturity and substance": Navy fans Lord Nelson and Elvis Presley.

all, when the original generation of boys obsessed with Joy Division, David Bowie's *Low*, Kraftwerk and The Velvet Underground wanted to dress like Berlin bank clerks of the '30s. Somehow, in the aesthetic marriage of an imagined past to an imaginary future, it all fitted.

It was also a time when one could never be too thin, nor smoke too much—two most probably interlinked occupations at which I was then extremely proficient. Stiff-fronted dress shirts (minus their collars), gorgeous dusty pink silk ties, and on one misguided occasion, even a pair of spats had found their way into my wardrobe. But jackets and trousers from the same source eluded me, having all been made, seemingly, for men who were considerably wider than they were tall.

On this particular Saturday, however, fortune decreed that I found not just an accessory, but an entire new look: a tailored suit of perfect fit, comprising double-breasted jacket with burgundy satin lining, sternum high trousers with turn-up—and the fabric, a devastatingly sharp and pristine navy blue. This would be my first experience of the near alchemical powers of navy blue: for somehow the suit made one look not only taller, but more defined as a presence. By way of congratulation, one of the art-school girls started wearing navy blue nail polish, on the shaky (but impressive, when said quickly) grounds that Angie Bowie (she claimed) wore it. Oh well... "My theme is memory, that winged host that soared about me one grey morning..."

As evidenced by suave British mid-20th century film stars such as Laurence Harvey, Sir Ralph Richardson, Dirk Bogarde, Olivier, Sean Connery (and so on...), navy worn well confers an air of aristocracy on the wearer—an air so persuasive that in the case of Bogarde, for instance, one could be

GETTY





forgiven for believing that there really was a coronet and a grouse moor tucked away somewhere down the family line. (An insinuation that Bogarde—for all his brilliance and glamour—did nothing to discourage, purportedly suggesting in all seriousness that his brother should address him in public as "Sir").

But why navy? We can begin with implications of colour, for navy seems to literalise a point of transition: out of the blue, and into the black (with apologies to Neil Young, who meant something more profound—about mortality and rebellion—in his creation of the phrase). Navy seems to be at its most effective when one has to look twice at the fabric—and more likely than not study it in daylight—in order to tell whether it is blue or black or true navy. Like blue-black ink for fountain pens, navy loans the authority of the officer class to civilians; it is grand without being pompous; it conveys in its poised position, tonally, between black and blue, gravitas, sobriety, formality, maturity and substance. And adding a shade of nobility to the colour's already richly loaded palette of discreet but formidable attributes merely enhances its sartorial appeal.

The poet Charles Baudelaire—one of dandyism's first and most serious interpreters—pointed out in his defining text on the subject that dandyism (as exemplified by what we might term "the correct use of navy") is indeed a means of democratising elitism. Hence its enduring appeal—not least to the post-punks of the late '70s, in search of their own time-travelling notions of sartorial exclusivity.

"Dandyism appears especially in those periods of transition when democracy has not yet become all-powerful," wrote Baudelaire, "and when aristocracy is only partially weakened and discredited. In the confusion of such times, a certain number of men, disenchanted and leisured 'outsiders', but all of them richly endowed with native energy, may conceive the idea of establishing a new kind of aristocracy, all the more difficult to break down because established on the most precious, the most indestructible faculties, on the divine gifts that neither work nor money can give. Dandyism is the last flicker of heroism in decadent ages."

What better livery for "a new kind of aristocracy" than the shade between black and blue? A colour betwixt the priestly and the imperial. For it is as though navy is encoded with the auras of power, seriousness and ceremony, but in an implied as opposed to official form. Navy carries within its constitution as a colour a necessary nuance of informality, but it is no more than a nuance: a mere batsqueak, barely audible, of elegance. Small wonder that many men default to navy (or ought to) as the "safest" colour—regardless of whatever cyclones, monsoons or global warming are passing through the capricious climate of men's fashions.

Navy solves a problem on a more simple basis: for with a neat historical backwards roll, we discover that Brummel was absolutely right with regard to his identification of those qualities of dress and demeanour that could make a gentleman the object of unwanted scrutiny. For to be "too fashionable", "too stiff" and "too tight" remain precisely the enemies of dress that will sink anyone's look before they leave the house. And equally, these are precisely the qualities that navy—as if by magic, when correctly deployed—will overcome.

Above, left and right
"The correct use of navy": JFK and Eddie Redmayne, notable fans of the navy blue two-piece.

Can you cut it?

Essential tools to prepare and cook meat.

Sirloin steak, pork belly, chateaubriand, lamb noisette, porchetta, haunch of venison… oh, sorry, we drifted off there for a moment. Meat, glorious meat. So, whether you're frying, grilling or roasting it, you need to give quality meat the full care and attention it deserves—and that means employing the right kitchen kit. To that end, we've put together the definitive meat-prep arsenal.



1. Slicer
One of the cleanest and most modern on the market, Graef's M9 machine not only slices in a range of 0–20mm, but is really quiet, too. Good for when you sneak down for a midnight snack of home-carved ham.
RM2,111*, *graef.co.uk*

2. Thermometer
This stainless steel gourmet meat thermometer by Rösle boasts an illuminated digital display that's accurate from –50ºC up to 300ºC, and they are seriously hardwearing. Good for those of you looking to perfect the colour of your steak.
RM240*, *rosle.co.uk*

3. Grill press
To keep your cuts nice and flat (if you like your bacon American-style, for instance), this Lodge meat press is the handy tool to use. If you're in a rush, it will keep meat pressed evenly to cook faster on the hot surface.
RM250*, *divertimenti.co.uk*

PHOTOGRAPH BY SAM ARMSTRONG.

4. Carving board
Hand-carved from a single piece of London plane tree wood, this board by Hackney company Hampson Woods is designed for carving meat, and was originally produced for the Hawksmoor restaurant chain. If they use it, you know it's good.
RM290*, *hampsonwoods.com*

5. Carving set
With horn-tipped handles and adorned with the famous Aubrac fly motif, this carving set by Laguiole is a handsome-looking addition to your kitchen arsenal. Blades made by Laguiole are also world renowned for their sharpness.
RM1,400*, *harrods.co*

6. Mincer
There are electric mincers on the market, of course, but nothing beats the feel and the heft of one that's clamped to a table and turned by hand. This one, by Thomas Plant, is made from sturdy cast iron, and comes with three sizes of mincing disc.
RM200*, *selfridges.com*

7. Cleaver
To step up your steak game into butchery, you'll need a good cleaver. This one by Victorinox, one of the best-trusted names in knives, is made from ice-tempered, high carbon stainless steel.
RM230*, *nisbets.co.uk*

8. Meat hammer
Use this to make tougher, less frequently used cuts of meat much more tender and toothsome. Its weight is evenly distributed (for optimum whacking), and it features a flat side for flattening out meat and a burled side for tenderising.
RM210*, *rosle.co.uk*

9. Skillet
When cooking steak on the hob, you need the pan to be as hot as possible, and the best heat-retainer is thick cast iron. Le Creuset is perhaps the most respected name in the pan industry, so this is your first choice.
RM640*, *lecreuset.co.uk*

10. Grill tongs
Using your fingers to turn your sizzling steaks is a terrible idea, for obvious reasons, so you'll need some tongs. Tom Dixon's are designed in London and the copper-plated finish offers some pleasing aesthetic relief to all the fire and smoking pans.
RM220*, *selfridges.com*



THANKS TO MEAT N16, *MEATLONDON.CO.UK*

Top year

High performance cars we're most looking forward to in 2016.



WORDS BY WILL HERSEY.



THE POCKET ROCKET
BMW M2 Coupé

BMW has unleashed the tuning wizards of its M division on the baby-sized 2 Series saloon to create the closest thing the Munich marque has probably ever come to a hot hatch. Visually, it's had the full M makeover, with more curves and skirts than Topshop, and a rounded rear end that includes those now-trademark quad exhausts. And that's probably the best view you'll be getting as it rinses you at the lights. Due April 2016; *bmw.co.uk*

BMW M2 COUPE

Engine
3.0 litre turbocharged six-cylinder petrol

Power
270KW

0–100KPH
4.4SECS

Top speed
230KMH

Economy
7.9LPG

Price
RM282,000*



THE YOUNG PRETENDER
McLaren 540C

Woking's finest are on a mission to "bring the brand to a new audience"—or sell more cars, to you and me—so enter the marque's most affordable motor yet, the RM806,000* 540C. Okay, it's not exactly chump change but it's a major price drop from its other models and puts it in direct competition with the new Audi R8 and the top-spec Porsche 911 Turbo. It promises to be more comfy and less intense to drive every day than its older brothers, but with almost 400KW and acceleration of 0–100KMH in 3.5 seconds, this is still a very serious piece of kit. RM806,000*, due early 2016; *mclaren.com*



THE HAIR DRYER
Lamborghini Huracán Spyder

How can you improve on the Huracán, Lambo's typically space age 5.2 litre V10? By taking its roof off, of course, and replacing it with a folding lightweight fabric soft top, which will make it one of the most terrifyingly fast convertibles on the planet. There's very little compromise on speed, with the new Spyder capable of 0–100KMH in 3.4 seconds to the coupé's 3.2, and it can still nudge past 320KMH if your nerves can handle it. And yes, that's what we mean by hair dryer. RM1.3 million, due spring 2016; *lamborghini.com*



THE COMEBACK KID
Honda NSX

There's been a long wait for this follow-up to the now legendary Ayrton Senna-developed, all-aluminium 1991 original, and the early signs are that it will live up to its predecessor's everyday-supercar philosophy. Given Honda's engineering credentials, it's predictably hi-tech: there's a hybrid powertrain that combines a 3.0 litre petrol engine with three electric motors, a nine-speed, dual-clutch gearbox and a lightweight chassis. And it looks fantastic. It's increasingly hard to make a new supercar that stands out, but this NSX design manages it. RM767,000*, due spring 2016; *honda.co.uk*

Lather! Lather! Lather!

Wash away those early morning blues with the finest luxury shower gels.



Best for post-gym Body Wash, RM127*, by **AB Crew**.

Best wake-up blast Coriander Seed Body Cleanser, RM210*, by **Aesop**.

Best relaxing properties Neroli Moisturising Body and Bathing Oil, RM380*, by **Czech & Speake**.

Best fragrance Bleu de Chanel Gel de Douche, RM160*, by **Chanel**.

Best for skin nourishment Santal 33 Shower Gel, RM205*, by **Le Labo**.

Time was, our daily ablutions consisted of a scratch, a face-splash of soapy water and a brush of our teeth. Now that we men are expected to scrub up as well as the women in our lives, our morning stumble into the shower involves an increasing array of lotions and potions. So, to help you navigate your early morning preparations for the day ahead, here is our pick of the best man-friendly body washes. Unfortunately, we can't help with that hard-to-reach spot on your back, though. That's down to you.

PHOTOGRAPH BY SAM HOFMAN. SET DESIGN BY ZENA MAY HENDRICK.

Prime time s(h)aver



It's quite often that you hear men say, "I'm too busy!" Too busy to work out, too busy to reply a text, too busy to buy a Valentine's gift. If you're one of them (we're not judging, really), this shaver tool is for you. All it takes is a couple of strokes for a quick, dry shave. The rounded head glides smoothly with five-direction Flex Heads, which means fewer strokes and not having to go over the same area twice. Then finish off your look by clicking on the precision trimmer, perfect for taking care of your moustache and sideburns. When the battery runs out, do a fast five-minute charge for one quick shave. So, what's your excuse now?
For more details on the Philips AquaTouch, visit philips.com

Gifts for wise men

Whatever you do this festive season, don't let your bar run dry. Here are Esquire's cocktail cabinet essentials.

1. Lemons, limes, eggs

2. Silver-plated cocktail shaker, RM511*, by Arthur Price; *luxdeco.com*

3. Tapatio Blanca Tequila, RM150* for 50CL; *thewhiskyexchange.com*

4. Grey Goose Vodka, RM217* for 70CL; *thewhiskyexchange.com*

5. Fever-Tree Indian tonic water, RM6* for 20CL; *thewhiskyexchange.com*

6. Large green olives

7. Tanqueray Export Strength Gin, RM130* for 70CL; *thewhiskyexchange.com*

8. Stainless steel jigger, RM80*, by Yukiwa; *starshaker.com*

9. SodaStream, RM640*; *sodastream.co.uk*

PHOTOGRAPHS BY SAM HOFMAN. WORDS BY RACHEL FELLOWS.
THANKS TO *WORLDS50BESTBARS.COM*



10. Triangle cocktail strainer, RM150*, by Yukiwa; *starshaker.com*

11. Noilly Prat Original Dry Vermouth, RM70* for 75cl; *thewhiskyexchange.com*

12. Maraschino Luxardo, RM140* for 50cl; *thewhiskyexchange.com*

13. Stainless steel Calabrese 31cm bar spoon, RM115*; *urbanbar.com*

14. Woodford Reserve Distiller's Select Bourbon, RM205* for 70cl; *thewhiskyexchange.com*

15. Stainless steel/wood ice pick, RM211*, by Daiya; *chuboknives.com*

16. Havana Club Three-Year-Old Rum, RM120* for 70cl; *thewhiskyexchange.com*

17. Cocchi Vermouth di Torino, RM125* for 75cl; *thewhiskyexchange.com*

18. Sugar (for making syrups)

19. Citrus zester with canelle blade, RM211*, by Rösle; *harrods.com*

20. Stainless steel/wood Waiter's Friend Corkscrew, RM190*, by Le Creuset; *lecreuset.co.uk*

21. Angostura Bitters, RM69* for 20cl; *thewhiskyexchange.com*

HERE'S WHAT YOU MISSED

THIS MONTH ON OUR OTHER PLATFORMS





TWITTER @ESQUIREMY

INSTAGRAM ESQUIREMY





FACEBOOK ESQUIREMALAYSIA

WWW.ESQUIRE.MY

Esquire MALAYSIA

You spin me round

The fundamentals are so important that without them, your mighty mechanical horological craft might not even have existed...

Words by Zentrix Chiu



Above
Terra Cielo Mare's Sorci Verdi.

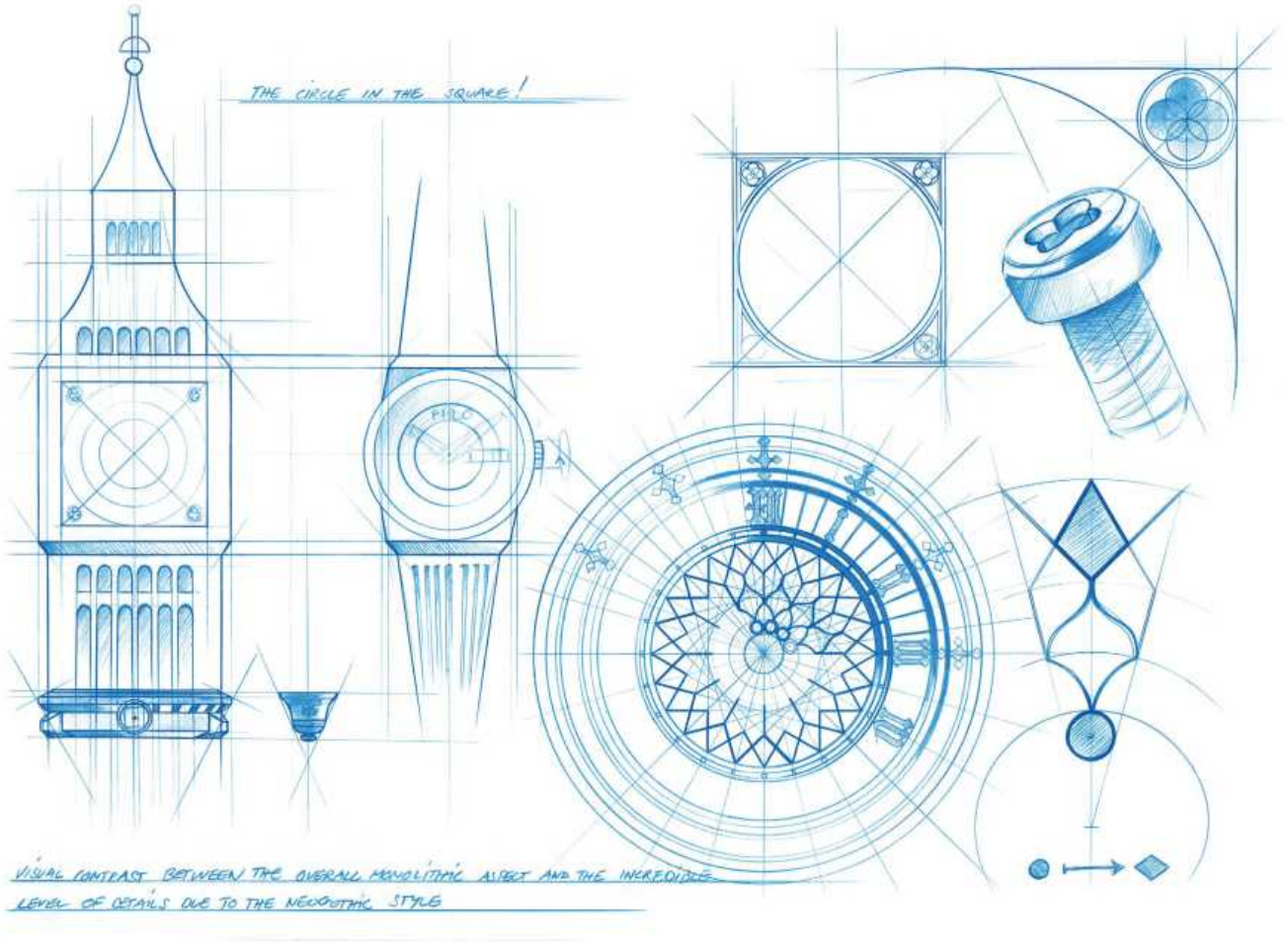
TIME REALLY FLIES. My last article appeared in Esquire more than a year ago, and I still remember penning my Esky views on minute repeaters, though I'm not sure if any of you actually remember! Well, my mini adventure in the horology trade has become a bit depressing, due to the falling ringgit that indirectly makes watch buying a really expensive affair. This development inspired me to focus on the notion of "Basics" for this particular article.

Everyone knows about crown winding, which is the use of the crown to do the dirty work of winding the main spring of a watch—even if you may not know it by its exact technical terminology. This is the most basic thing that one can do to bring any mechanical timepiece back to life. Historians attribute this particular invention to Jean Adrien Philippe in 1842. However, it is another great talent, Charles-Antoine LeCoultre, who managed to combine both the winding and the adjustment of the hands using a single crown in 1847. This system was inherently more practical and is adopted by 99.9 percent of today's watches. This is otherwise known as the "LeCoultre Method".

So for the last 169 years, this method largely went untouched by every great watch house until a courageous upstart came along. Terra Cielo Mare from Italy actually dared to improve the technique by replacing the tiny crown with a more user-friendly and larger bezel to perform the winding and the adjustment. This is a godsend for those with plump fingers like my aunties. Yes, this simple yet logical innovation makes them deserving of their claim to have invented the world's first bezel-winding watch. Despite what some might argue, this feat is one of the most useful improvements that I feel truly turns jaded collectors into excited boys again.

This brilliant innovation is housed in Terra Cielo Mare's limited edition Sorci Verdi, which is dedicated to the great Italian air squadron, the Green Mice. The entire design is inspired by the cockpit of the legendary S79 airplane that took to the skies during the Second World War. Unbelievable "toys" such as an inclinometer and an original metal fragment from a S79 plane are actually included on the back and the side of the case—it's enough to make any grown-up man drool at such Italian design ingenuity. Housed in a 43mm titanium grade 5 case and powered by a Concepto movement, which is also used in Linde Werdelin watches, this incredible aviation watch is sure to surprise any enthusiast whose choice of watches is not dictated by marketing gods.

The world's first bezel-winding watch is limited to only 79 pieces and expected to retail at EUR5,890, which is very affordable considering the attention to detail involved. If the brand name had included the renowned alphabets "Pa...i", then I think you could probably have expected to see one more zero tagged onto the price. With no end in sight for the ringgit's downward slide, perhaps Esky readers should quickly acquire this piece while it's still relatively affordable. Now, that to me is truly 100 percent Esky.



Purely by design

The finale for the very first watch competition by a Swiss watch brand took place in Shanghai recently. Is this the start of something new?

Words by Leong Wong

FOR A SWISS WATCHMAKER, being two years shy of a century in business is considered relatively young. Mido entered watchmaking right at the beginning of the wristwatch trend. It was founded by George G Schaeren who named his new company after the Spanish phrase "Yo mido" meaning, "I measure". It was an exciting time, just after World War I, when Europe was finally released from the shackles of its atrocities and ready to move on. All those suppressed and latent creativities bubbled up, ready to burst forth.

INNOVATIONS OVER THE YEARS

Mido came into existence at the right place and the right moment, thanks to the explosion of engineering and innovations in science, resulting in the birth of a new luxury car era. Drawing inspiration from the pool of these engineering beauties, Mido fashioned beautifully crafted and elegant watches after the iconic grilles of these motorcars.

A decade or so later came their very first notable innovation, the AquaDura, a cork-crown sealing system that was extremely water-resistant, for an automatic movement in a new watch then called the Multifort. That's not all; Mido also made history with the world's first anti-magnetic watch. Then in the late '50s came another milestone with the introduction of the single-shell case watch in the form of the Ocean Star. The case was cut out from a single block of steel, making it even more water-resistant than anything that came before it, especially when coupled with the AquaDura. These technological innovations made Mido one of the most desirable watches for lovers of aquatic sports.

Armed with its vast archive of technical know-how, Mido is raring to go in the 21st century. The highlight of 2015 was yet another first for the brand—a watch design competition with London's Neo-Gothic Big Ben as its muse. The winner was announced (as determined by an online vote) during a gala in Shanghai last October.

Top
Technical drawings of the winning watch design and its sources of inspiration.



Above
The front view of the winning watch design with its unique Roman numeral "IV" on the dial.

Insert above
The view of the caseback with its unique circle within a square design and a Big Ben decorated dial on the rotor.

THE SHANGHAI VENUE

The venue for the event was The Swatch Art Peace Hotel, one of the two famous Peace Hotels that sit across from each other on Nanjing Road in the Chinese city of Shanghai. It is also commonly known as the South Building. The hotel's main purpose is to host artists from around the world who work and live in a dedicated apartment over a certain period of time. The 19th century building was recently restored to its former glory; for example, the finale was held in the ballroom on the fourth floor accessible via two refurbished antique elevators.

THE MAIN EVENT

The event opened with a fanfare of—you guessed it—an English military band and Scottish bagpipes. Guests were formally welcomed by Franz Linder, President of Mido, and Esa Mohamed, President of the International Union of Architects. As part of a Q&A with the world's press, Linder was asked why Big Ben was chosen as the inspiration for the contest. He responded, "We have always used iconic European buildings as a source of inspiration, so it's only natural that we pursue the same direction with what we consider to be the most iconic building in the world."

The three participants of the design contest were Eric Giroud, Lorenzo Vallone and Sébastien Perret. Their designs were shown together with a video clip filmed in their studios. Each participant demonstrated how Big Ben had inspired him. After that, it was revealed that an online vote had favoured Perret's design as the winning submission.

THE WINNING WATCH

At first glance, the winning design looks deceptively simple, almost like any other, but when you examine it up close, it tells a different story. The shape of the case is clearly inspired by the face of Big Ben, with a square framing the round dial. The dial also uses appliqué indexes for hour markers—except for the unique Roman numeral "IV", in-



Above
Franz Linder, Sébastien Perret and Esa Mohamed.

Right
The winnning design and all its different angles with its source of inspiration, the Big Ben.



stead of the usual "IIII", which is a nod to the British norm. The dial of the watch is itself a complex design as it incorporates three different executions of finishing—a mix of guilloché on satin, satin and a central sunburst. The black appliqué hour indexes are coated with luminescent and repeated on the three hands. This makes it easy to read yet exudes a classic feel with the spirit of Big Ben.

On the flip side, it's an entirely different execution that tells the same story, albeit a fuller one.

FRANZ LINDER

Asia is now the biggest market for watches. Have you considered other iconic architecture designs apart from the Great Wall of China?
Looking for a new monument can be a challenge for us. Whether it is the US, Europe or Asia isn't really of importance; it is the spirit of the building. That is the basic criterion. It is challenging to find a design pattern that matches.

Besides architecture, what else does Mido want to explore?
We want to communicate the quality of our movements. Mido is a brand in the mid-range segment that offers the largest choice of COSC-certified chronometers. This is also a statement of quality and the highest official standard for a movement that you can get. It is also important to underline that we are offering really good value for money.

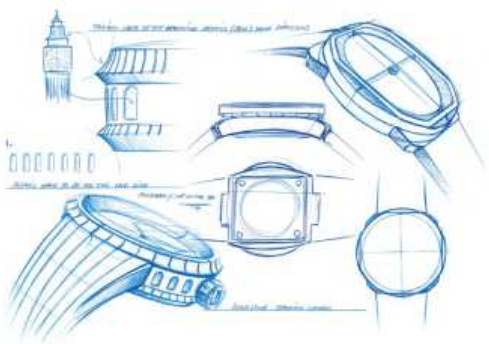
Which is the next market that Mido wants to develop?
We are now actively developing Asia. We just opened in Japan, as we were not active there before. We are opening in Italy too. Now, we have to take more care of Europe, because there is still a lot of potential for us. Mido is in 60 countries, and our ambition is to be ideally the number one, or at least the number two, brand in our price position for mechanical watches in those countries. We want to be strong rather than be everywhere but only number five or six in a particular market.

Why let the public be the judge in this competition rather than a panel of judges?
At the end of the day, it's not a jury of five experts who will keep our business going. We really want to have the opinion of our customers, and basically produce what they would go for. Sometimes, we become so absorbed in the business that we become blind. If I were to talk to watch people, and then friends about watches, they would be two completely different discussions. It is an interesting lesson to see how people think. This watch should be a success; otherwise, it would be strange, ja?

Will this contest be held regularly?
We haven't decided what we will do in the future. For now, we have to finish this contest, and then we will see. We are slowly preparing for our 100th anniversary so no firm decision has been made at this time.









Elements that were absent from the design of the dial now appear on the caseback. The square of the clock is now its main frame. It is screwed in by four screws with heads inspired by the floral impression seen on the clock. The intricate floral petal design on the centre dial is now guillochéd onto the rotor. Perret has cleverly split Big Ben's face and dial between the watch dial and the caseback so as not to overwhelm the former. What makes the caseback unique is how the round dial cleverly hides the square of the caseback and yet exposes the intricate inner workings of the movement within. If you turn the watch on its side, you'll notice vertical grooves along the caseband. These are inspired by the long vertical windows that appear along the entire length of the tower. Almost every element of Big Ben has been incorporated into this rather complex watch in terms of both design and execution. The winning design will have a limited production run of 500 pieces and debut at Baselworld 2016.

Clockwise from below left
Technical drawings of the details of the watch and final artist's impression of the watch. The presentation setup of the event at the hotel's ballroom; the view of the caseback.

SÉBASTIEN PERRET



What makes your watch design stand out from that of the other two participants?
That's an interesting but tricky question. It's important not to make a concept watch, but a real watch that can be integrated into a collection in the future.

What elements did you keep in mind when designing the Big Ben?
First of all, it is important to keep the watch round, because most Mido watches are round. Secondly, you must put the circle in the square, as in the square goes to the back and the circle stays in front. Thirdly, the watch was created with part of a larger collection in mind.

Explain the Roman numeral "IV".
In the watch industry, you usually use the Roman numeral "IIII" to represent the digit four, but on the Big Ben, I used "IV" and that's why I highlighted the numerals on the dial. This lends a humourous touch.



A new vision

Matthieu Dupont, Managing Director of IWC Southeast Asia, talks about the new Portugieser, which is celebrating its 75th anniversary this year, as well as his broader plans for the region.

Words by Leong Wong

ESQUIRE: How do you find Singapore, and how have you settled in?
MATTHIEU DUPONT: I love Singapore, as I have been here many times before. It is very different from Dubai where I was based previously. I love the weather, and the culture is quite amazing. I love the food too. The people in Singapore are so friendly. Getting around Asia is very easy as well, because Singapore is the hub of Asia. It is also right in the centre of the most beautiful part of the world.

ESQ: What is the working philosophy of IWC?
MD: IWC is about passion for watchmaking, perfection in craftsmanship and technical innovation. These are the three things that we care about the most. On the manufacturing side, we are concerned with precision and performance during the production process of each timepiece that we make. When there is a problem or a challenge, we solve it with innovative solutions. There's always something going on, and there's never been a dull day since I started working with IWC. The workplace is always vibrant and full of energy, because we have a dynamic CEO. It is all about moving forward, and the direction is clear, and it is reflected in the brand's dynamism. As Georges Kern once said: "A brand is a living organism. If it is stagnant, then it is dead."

ESQ: What changes have you seen during your time with IWC?
MD: I started working with IWC in 2005. I was based in the UK first, and then I went to the Middle East. In all the years that I have been with IWC, I have seen it evolving, and it still is. We have very strong watches, and every range is doing well. We have also become actively involved in CSR. We partnered with the Laureus Sport for Good Foundation, which helps to promote sports and education among underprivileged children around the world. We also established the Antoine de Saint Exupéry Youth Foundation, which helps to develop the future of underprivileged youth, in addition to a few other arts foundations. We have a new state-of-the-art manufacture too.

ESQ: Let's talk about the Portugieser and its 75th anniversary celebrations.
MD: The planning started about a year ago. The marketing of the watch itself was done a year in advance. It is certainly an honour to celebrate the anniversary of the Portugieser. While it will take place regionally throughout the course of the year, the celebration will be more localised and on a smaller scale, so that we can have more intimate encounters with our clients, watch enthusiasts and fans. We hope to celebrate the Portugieser again in 75 years' time.

ESQ: Three new calibres have been introduced for the anniversary. How long did they take from inception to completion?
MD: The calibres took longer; they started out years ago, as technical expertise and engineering were required. The process of producing a movement also depends on technological advancements and availability. In the Calibre 52000, we used the latest technology available, which is the best that innovation can allow right now. The new calibres are designed to accommodate additional complication modules; apart from the Automatic in the latest collection, we have added the Annual Calendar and the Perpetual Calendar. For the moment, they are used for these particular Portugieser models, but further down the road, we definitely plan to expand the 52000 into other ranges.

ESQ: All IWC ranges are well established, with some that are considered truly iconic. Will we be seeing the introduction of a new range in the near future?
MD: As you pointed out, our ranges are already very strong, and we have something for nearly everyone. We're not trying to attract a younger crowd with a new range, but instead enhancing existing ranges to attract them. It's working, because the numbers are growing, and we are very pleased with that.

What's in store for 2016

We're barely into the new year, and our favourite watchmakers are already teasing us with their tantalising creations.



Piaget
Emperador Coussin XL 700P

As hard as it is to believe, 40 years have passed since the quartz movement shook the watchmaking world to its core. Today, Piaget celebrates the 40th anniversary of its first in-house quartz movement. They have managed to contain it to just the "generator", which is capable of emitting an extremely high frequency of 32,768Hz, compared to the average 4Hz, that powers the rest of the inner workings of the 700P movement. Oh, it's anti-magnetic too. This marvel of a hybrid movement is housed in an iconic Black Tie Emperador cushion-shaped brushed white-gold case with an ADLC-coated black and white gold bezel. The dial is blackened and decorated with an off-centred hour and minute dial with sunburst design and white-gold hour index markers. The micro rotor sits at nine o'clock while the generator is seen at two o'clock. This unique timepiece is limited to 118 editions.



A Lange & Söhne
1815 Tourbillon Handwerkskunst

The occasion of the founder's 200th birthday is certainly good enough reason to pull out all the stops in a deserving homage to Ferdinand Adolph Lange—and it goes without saying that the 1815 Tourbillon Handwerkskunst is no ordinary timepiece. Though it may look relatively simple and adorned with only one jewel—a tourbillon—don't be fooled, for the jewel itself comes with a pair od special complications: a stop seconds device and a ZERO-RESET. They allow you to actually stop the tourbillon and adjust the time without losing a second. The watch movement is fully hand decorated and the dial is made of black-rhodiumed pink gold decorated with a fine granular structure, while the appliqué Arabic numerals are in red gold, as is the case that this hand-wound mechanical marvel is housed in. Get ready to sharpen those elbows before joining the scrum, because there are only 30 pieces available worldwide.



Cartier
Clé de Cartier Automatic Skeleton

This new kid on the block made its debut last year during SIHH. One year on, and Cartier have decided to "remove" the dial completely by making it transparent. The entire movement has also been arranged at the bottom of the skeletonised bridge to resemble Roman numerals that double up as the hour markers. The hour and minute hands are in blue steel and the timepiece is powered by an automatic mechanical movement with a skeleton rotor—all encased in a palladium body.



Baume et Mercier
Classima M0A 10216

Known for their classic simplicity, we expect to see a range of updates to existing ranges this year. The Classima has been given a two-tone treatment that is gaining popularity for its significantly more sophisticated and polished outlook. A polished gold bezel frames the opaline silver-coloured dial decorated with a line guilloché centre. The hands, appliqué indexes and Roman numeral hour markers are gilt. This timepiece comes with an automatic movement with 38 hours of power reserve that is housed in a polished stainless steel case.



Montblanc
Heritage Chronométrie Collection
Twincounter Date

First launched last year to great success, there is no doubt that the design of this timepiece redefines modern classicism in all its glorious simplicity. What makes this new addition different, however, is its completely new movement that was developed and manufactured in-house by Montblanc's master watchmakers. The timepiece itself has a silver sunburst dial with gold-plated appliqué indexes and Arabic numeral hour markers, a feature which is repeated on the hour and minute hands. The twin counters sit at nine o'clock and three o'clock for the small seconds and the date indicator respectively, and indicated via blue steel hands. The automatic mechanical movement with date function is housed in a stainless steel case.



Jaeger-LeCoultre
Reverso Classic Duoface

How time flies! The Reverso was first created for the polo-playing army officers of the British Raj 85 years ago, and it has since become a much-coveted icon in its own right. As its name suggests, the Duoface has two dials, one of which is dedicated to a second time zone. In this particular iteration, the centre of the rectangular dial in sunburst silver is decorated with Clous de Paris guilloché. It also has black transferred Arabic numeral hour markers, blue steel hands and a small seconds at six o'clock, while on the reverse is a black dial with white markers and hands. An automatic mechanical movement powers the two time zones with 38 hours of power reserve, enclosed in a pink gold case.


RADO
5
AUTOMATIC
SWISS
MADE

MODERN CLASSICS

Beauty is in the eye of the beholder, but for Rado, it's their high-tech material that makes them so much more special.

Words by Leong Wong
Photography and styling by Marcus Wong

HyperChrome Automatic
Brown high-tech ceramic case. Brown dial with appliqué Super-LumiNova rose gold-plated hour indexes and hands. Automatic mechanical movement.



Centrix Automatic Open Heart
Stainless steel case. Rose gold-plated hour indexes and hands. Silver skeleton dial. Automatic mechanical movement.



DiaMaster Grande Seconde
Plasma high-tech ceramic case. White barley-corn guilloché dial with dual off-centred face with grand seconds, hours and minutes. Gold-plated hour and minute indexes and black transfer Arabic numeral seconds markers. Gold-plated hands. Automatic mechanical movement.



DiaMaster Automatic Chronograph
Anthracite plasma high-tech ceramic case. Sunburst anthracite dial with rhodium-coloured hour indexes and hands. Three sub-dials with rhodium-coloured markers and hands. Automatic chronograph mechanical movement.



HyperChrome Ceramic Touch Dual Timer
Matte grey high-tech ceramic case. Grey sunburst dials with Super-LumiNova hour rhodium-plated markers and hands. Second time zone dial at six o'clock. Quartz movement.


RADO
26
AUTOMATIC
SWISS MADE



Left
True Automatic
Plasma high-tech ceramic case. Silver dial with Super-LumiNova rose gold-plated hour indexes and hands. Automatic mechanical movement.

Right
HyperChrome Automatic Chronograph
Steel-coloured plasma high-tech ceramic and stainless steel case. Appliqué Super-LumiNova steel hour indexes and hands. Three sub-dials for chronograph counters and small seconds counter. Automatic mechanical chronograph movement.

ESQUIRE 10

ILLUSTRATED NEEDS

This 2016, draw some inspiration from all around you and make the best of it.

Words by Sim Wie Boon
Illustrations by Vicky De Diego



1.
BIOTHERM HOMME FORCE SUPREME YOUTH ARCHITECT SERUM
This product is specially designed with silver foxes in mind. Its improved lightweight formula fights the signs of ageing and gives your mug a healthy glow, while reducing expression lines. Don't sleep on it—it pays to invest in your skin.

2.
MITSUBISHI OUTLANDER
Rather than just a cosmetic upgrade, the new Outlander has been completely redesigned into the sleek and powerful vehicle that you see now. With an improved structural chassis, new capabilities and enhanced security features, it is dynamic and expressive, just like how you imagine yourself to be.



3.
BOTRÁN & CO 75TH ANNIVERSARY RUM
The Guatemalan company celebrates its milestone year with a special edition called Botrán & Co. The aged rum is a blend of the family's Private Reserve rums, aged between five and 30 years, produced using the company's *solera* process and matured in former bourbon white oak casks, toasted casks, as well as old sherry, port and South American wine casks. Limited to 9,972 bottles worldwide.



4.
LOEWE ANTON
This butter-soft calfskin sling bag in bright red has a name: the Anton. With its laid-back, modern silhouette, it adds a touch of flair that every man desires for his wardrobe this season.



5.
FEVER-TREE ELDERFLOWER TONIC WATER
A good cocktail is only as good as its mixers, and this Elderflower tonic water comes from the makers of some of the world's best. It lends a light, sweet touch characterised by a floral scent and subtle citrus notes that's balanced by the bitterness of natural quinine. Perfect for gins and vodkas.



6.
BMW 7 SERIES
If you are looking for the latest in design, technology and exclusivity, the new BMW 7 Series is an unparalleled masterpiece. Gesture control, intelligent voice capabilities and an Executive Lounge in the backseat (a tablet is included that handles up to 24 functions) are just some of the car's highlights. Not to mention a powerful engine and a roaring design.



7.
CLARKS PENTON LIMIT
Nothing else comes close to this formal yet comfortable shoe. With the Clarks Cushion Plus technology that incorporates intelligent dual density cushioning, you can be rest assured that your feet will be very well taken care of indeed.



8.
BANG & OLUFSEN BEOPLAY H8
Free yourself of the tangled mess and enjoy your music with these wireless headphones that can easily be managed with hand gestures. Coming in at a mere 255o but packed with unique technology, you are set for a completely immersive experience.



9.
ZEGNA CHUKKA BOOTS
These simple, casual and sleek chukkas were made for walking. Incorporating technical features such as neoprene and insulated rubber soles, this pair will be your trusty companion no matter where you take your feet. And you'll be doing it in style, natch.



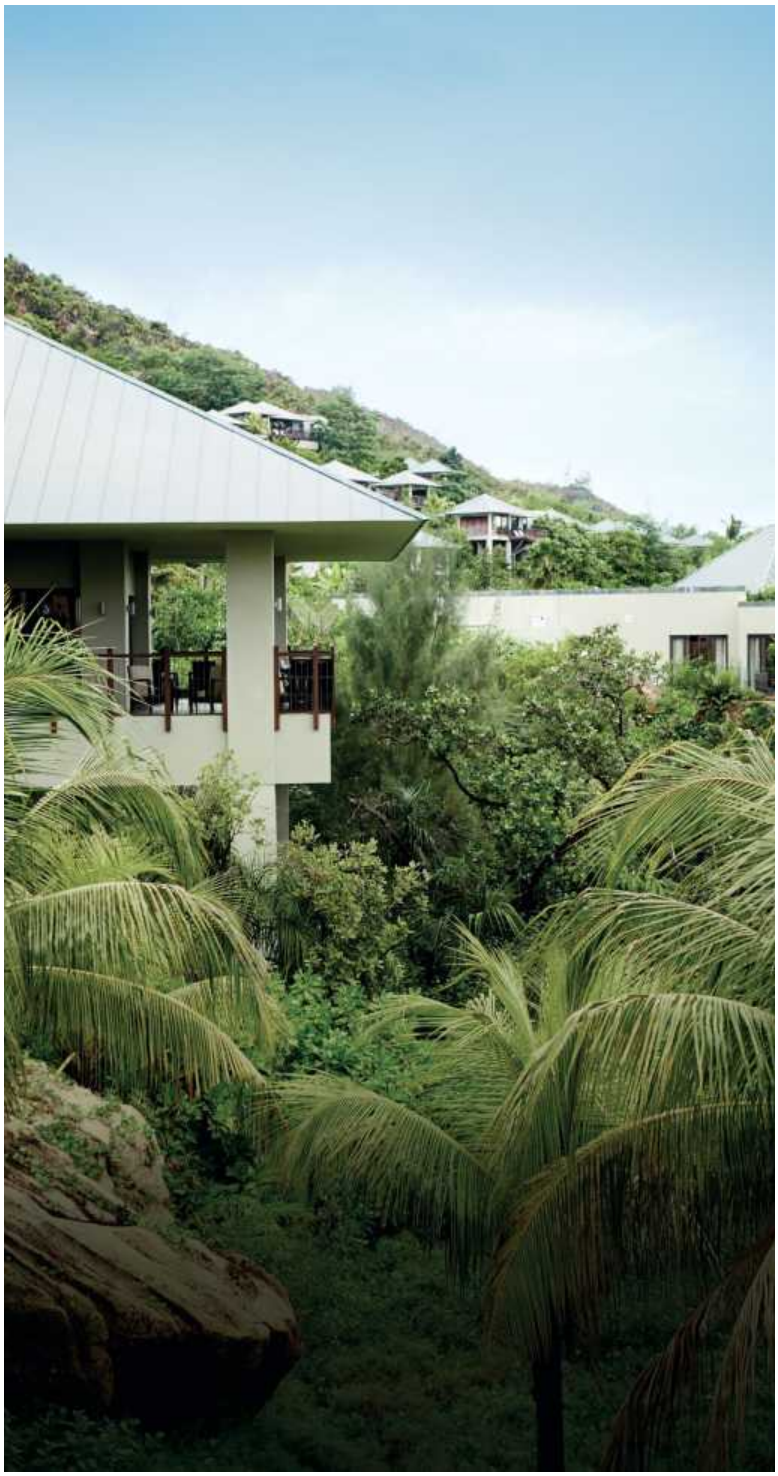


10.
BARBOUR BOMBER JACKET
We'll never tire of bomber jackets. This version by the makers of the iconic waxed jacket is an essential item that every man's closet shouldn't be without. In *de rigueur* military green with elastic cuffs and padding, Barbour is right on the money with this piece.

THE GOOD SPA GUIDE

Because men need pampering, too.

Words by Miranda Collinge, Johnny Davis, Catherine Hayward, Tom Macklin, Charlie Teasdale and Teo van den Broeke.



1. THE BEACH ONE

Work on your tan while you wind down on the sugar-white sands of the Seychelles.

It may take a while to reach the Raffles Praslin resort (our 16-hour journey involved a Eurostar from London to Paris, a flight from Paris to the Seychellois capital Mahé, finishing with a seaplane hop from there to Praslin) but the journey is more than worth the effort. Bang in the middle of the Indian Ocean—it's 2,500KM from Africa and a good 4,000KM in the other direction to India—this tiny island paradise is so picturesque, it feels like you've flown onto the set of a Timotei advert. The resort's myriad villas are built on the mountainous side of the island with unspoilt views over the improbably azure Indian Ocean while its perennial tropical vegetation is punctuated with pink hibiscus and yellow frangipani. Once you've made the most of your personal plunge pool and soaked up some sun on the resort's immaculate private beach, head over to the Praslin spa for a massage in one of the 13 treatment pavilions, just so you're ready for another few hours of sunbathing and slothing.
raffles.com/praslin

THE TREATMENT

We opted for the Raffles Praslin Signature Massage. Incorporating the physicality of Thai massage and energising Balinese techniques (with a bit of *tai chi* thrown in), this intense massage is far more invigorating than the oily prods you're likely to receive in lesser spas. Perfect if you were intending to go to Praslin's fully functioning fitness centre—but didn't quite make it down the hill.

WHY IT'S GREAT FOR MEN

The Raffles Praslin is more than happy to tailor treatments to your specific needs, so if you're suffering from a sports injury, they'll work your massage around it; or if you're dealing with sunburn (as the majority of male guests, including ourselves, tended to be) they will tailor-make treatments to soothe the stinging, damaged skin and minimise its redness.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY MARK LONG.



2. THE ON-TREND ONE
Pep yourself up between parties at Soho House Istanbul.

With 18.37 million visitors last year and a burgeoning arts scene, it's no surprise the Soho House Group chose Istanbul to build the 13th addition to its global portfolio. Between the Bosphorus and the minarets in the Beyoglu area stands Istanbul House, opened in April this year. It took four years to build and centres around the club house, an exquisite 19th century colonial structure designed by Italian architect Giacomo Leoni; once a family home, later a US embassy, and now, impressively restored to its former grandeur. The imposing stone building encompasses three restaurants, a rooftop infinity pool and bar, the Embassy Club (for late night drinks and resident DJs) and a maze of decadent, high-ceilinged rooms.

The hotel, a modernist building next door, offers 87 bedrooms, cinema, gym and a vast Cowshed spa that engulfs the lower levels. If you don't fancy being scrubbed to within an inch of your life at a Turkish hammam, Cowshed offers a luxurious alternative. It's a personal experience, almost biblical, as you lie on a marble slate in a heated room, while a multitude of sins are washed away. There is a menu tailored specifically to the male clientele, using Neville products, Soho House's male grooming range. *sohohouseistanbul.com*

THE TREATMENT
The "Neville Full Works" is an hour-long grooming treatment specifically for men, including a facial cleanse, exfoliation, extraction and steam, facial massage and mask, shoulder, neck and scalp massage.

WHY IT'S GREAT FOR MEN
Framed with dark wooden-panelled walls, leather armchairs, masculine tones and bare concrete pillars this spa is for men. Its well-appointed barber shop offers cuts and treatments, beard and moustache maintenance and traditional wet shaves. The state of the art fitness studio also far exceeds a standard hotel gym.



Top
The Cowshed spa room is designed for relaxation.

Above
Cowshed spa massage room.

Right, above and below
The *château's* hilltop aspect. Inside Spa Saint-Martin Sisley.







3. THE ONE FOR COUPLES
Settle in for a tag team treatment in the South of France.

The Château Saint-Martin and spa, perched on a peak 460m above sea level in Vence on the Cote d'Azur, offers timeless elegance and luxury in that typically French "if it ain't broke..." fashion. Château Saint-Martin was built in 1936 on the site of a 12th-century Knights Templar stronghold—the ruined chapel is still visible—and is surrounded by a 300-year-old olive grove and, blissfully, very little else. The hotel has 52 rooms, six villas, an infinity pool, two restaurants and a *Mad Men*-esque bar. The spa is exceptional using advanced products by Sisley, that smell and feel rather amazing. *chateau-st-martin.com*

THE TREATMENT
The signature "Exceptional Ritual for Face and Body" comprises over two hours of rejuvenating treatments that will leave you ready to face the day's important issues, such as which sun lounger to pick, and when to take your next nap.

WHY IT'S GREAT FOR MEN
What's for dinner? A fillet steak and bottle of red on the terrace of Restaurant Le Saint-Martin overlooking the Cap d'Antibes. Merci beaucoup.



Right
The Hotel Gritti Palace, Venice.

4. THE CULTURAL ONE

Embrace the most beautiful city in the world from the comfort of your massage bed.

Though Venice may not be the first destination you'd consider for a relaxing break, the new Acqua di Parma spa at the Gritti Palace should send it to the top of your list. Originally commissioned as a grand family home in 1475, it is one of the city's great institutions. Opposite the Basilica Santa Maria Della Sallute on the edge of the Grand Cabal and only five minutes from Piazza San Marco, it's the perfect base from which to explore the city. But a recent refurbishment means it's now also the perfect place to escape the bustling streets when it gets too much.

The Acqua di Parma-managed Blu Mediterraneo Spa is appointed with Murano glass, wenge wood and precious marble, and features a space dedicated to footbaths (for all those cobble-tired feet), a pair of Turkish baths and treatment suites with space for two. If you go for the hour-long gentleman's facial, though, we wouldn't blame you for wanting the room all to yourself.
acquadiparma.com/spa

THE TREATMENT

The crowning glory is the Blu Mediterraneo Spa Signature Massage, a treatment of ultimate relaxation, thanks partly to the beguiling scent of Acqua di Parma products, of which there is an abundant array to choose from. The perfect remedy for a tough day navigating the cobbles of La Serenissima.

WHY IT'S GREAT FOR MEN

With one of the most comprehensive men-only treatment menus this side of the Adriatic, it's a no-brainer.

5. THE TOTAL SWITCH-OFF

Get down and dusty with nature at the Amangiri Utah.

Founded in 1988 by Indonesian hotelier Adrian Zecha, the Aman boutique hotel concept, which now stands at 30 resorts worldwide, was groundbreaking at a time when resorts usually featured 500 rooms or more. Amangiri, set in roughly 2.4 square kilometres of ancient Navajo desertscape in Utah, USA, has just 34. Derived from the Sanskrit word for "peaceful mountain", Amangiri really is a tranquil and remote hideaway from hectic city life, albeit against a backdrop of the most breathtaking terrain.

A civilised 25-minute drive from Paige airport (or 2.5 hours if you arrive from St George), the welcome is warm and personal. Rooms are all suites with varying levels of luxury. Our desert view suite—all white stone floors and neutral timbers—came with an enormous, walkaround bed, double rain-showers plus tub, and a private terrace with a light your own fireplace, which threw magical light into the room as the sun set over the nearby mountain range.

Bigger suites have their own plunge pool but the hotel's *piece de resistance* is surely the magnificent swimming pool cut around an enormous rock that looms out of the escarpment next to the dining area. *aman.com/resorts/amangiri*



THE TREATMENT

We headed to the impressive water pavilion which houses a modernist steam room, plunge pool and dry sauna with a yoga studio next door. A relaxing 30-minute float tank experience (salty and dark) was followed by a deep tissue massage—with another spectacular view to the rockscape just 20m away—and then a free candlelight yoga session to stretch muscles weary from travelling.

WHY IT'S GREAT FOR MEN

Far from sitting around in dressing gowns, the best thing about Amangiri is the abundance of activities on offer in and around the hotel. After a strenuous morning spent climbing the rocky Hoodoo Via Ferrata trail (actual rock climbing, so be warned), we spent the following morning in a high-energy, complimentary pilates class with the playful Connie—nicknamed The Mistress of Fitness.

Above
Spa step pool.





Above
The hotel's huge waterside lobby.

Right
A deluxe suite at Oberoi Mumbai.



6. THE CITY ESCAPE

Take time out from the mania of Mumbai at the Oberoi Hotel.

If you've ever been to Mumbai—or anywhere else in India—you'll know that to fully enjoy the remarkable culture, incomparable architecture and stunning surroundings, you need to embrace the chaos. A charming chaos, absolutely—but chaos nonetheless. Once you've made a jaunt to the Gateway of India monument and slurped a lassi on Chowpatty Beach, head along Marine Drive to the Oberoi Hotel—a marble-clad haven of calm in the manic metropolis—for a cleansing indigenous treatment in the hotel's sprawling spa (and a cheeky gin and tonic after). *oberoihotels.com*

THE TREATMENT

Try the "Journey to India" treatment, a 2.5-hour sensory experience incorporating traditional Ayurvedic methods with an Indian foot and head massage—perfect when you've been jostled by the crowds on the city streets all day.

WHY IT'S GREAT FOR MEN

We all love a targeted treatment that actually does something, and the nature of Ayurvedic massage is that it's designed to target specific issues in the body such as poor digestion, reduced circulation or tired skin.



SPECIAL MENTIONS



CLARIDGE'S, LONDON

The Sisley spa at this historic hotel is second to none.

Set atop the hotel, its calm belies its Central London site. Rooms are well appointed, therapists are knowledgeable and discreet, and treatments, from grooming brand Sisley, are very relaxing.
The treatment: "Ecological Facial for Men", a gentle exfoliation to avoid break-outs, and lashings of Sisley's intensely nourishing products. Ideal before a night out. *claridges.co.uk*



CORINTHIA, LONDON

Housing an enormous spa—one of the capital's finest.

Espa Life now offers the Whisky and Wet Shave—a haircut, wet shave, manicure, eyebrow shaping and use of the Movie Makeover Room, a separate, secret salon supposedly kept for visiting music and movie types, with all state-of-the-art mod cons.
The Treatment: The new "Medical Massage", which identifies health problems, then treats them holistically. *espalifeatcorinthia.com*



SOHO FARMHOUSE, OXFORDSHIRE

Book a long weekend in a big country house.

Nestled in 0.4SQKM of countryside near Chipping Norton, the Farmhouse is close enough to London to make it an easy post-work escape, but far enough away to make you feel fully cut off.
The Treatment: Visit the Cowshed spa for a scrub, soak and massage—then go boating on the lake. *sohofarmhouse.com*

LAST RESORT

Rosewood, London

Words by Ian Loh





Housed in a 1914 Edwardian Belle Époque building, Rosewood London evokes a flamboyant charm from a beautiful era. Instead of modernising or minimalising it, designer Tony Chi has kept most of the original structure and interiors, including the grand Pavonazzo marble staircase and Grade II-listed street frontage and dome. It's hard not to notice the opulente interiors (with the help of a GBP85 million renovation), as the quality of furnishings, amenities and frippery are astounding. But it is the details that impress us the most: quadruple-ish thread-count bedding, Etro throws, lacquered furniture, *objets d'art* and chirping songbirds in oversized birdcages (that totally caught us off guard, by the way), high-end glassware abound and one-of-a-kind objects scattered throughout the public areas. There's even a mini library where you can find a decent selection of Taschen books, which is lovely. The overall look is masculine, held up by phallic marble pillars and dressed with leather-clad stools and chairs, and there's a fire roaring in its hearth. But the rooms are softer with a very welcoming bar in the hallway, which opens to a huge selection of snacks and drinks, including a handcrafted sloe gin in a diamond-shaped glass bottle with handwritten labels. Again, the details have won us over. The bathroom is another huge plus, with enormous wardrobe space, flattering lighting and fantastic products from Czech & Speake. Breakfast in the stunning Mirror Room is a lavish affair, and for drinks, the stately Scarfes Bar with a handsome fireplace is best for drinks on a cold and drab London nights. It's a bit like staying at the mansion of a *really* rich, slightly eccentric and super-indulgent relative that we wish we had.

Rosewood London Hotel is rated a "Superb" 9.1/10, based on traveller reviews on leading hotel booking website Agoda.com. *Travellers can also browse the Agoda app to find app-exclusive deals on selected hotels.*

rosewoodhotels.com/en/london



TRADITION, TRADITION, TRADITION

Tradition is an inherent and unavoidable part of the Asian psyche, and Chinese New Year is a perfect example of this. While some tend to vary depending on your ancestry, as well as due to the generation gap, here are a few bog standard CNY traditions to bear in mind, as you get ready to usher in the Year of the Monkey.

SPRING-CLEANING

It's considered good luck to clean your house before Chinese New Year, as this "sweeps away" any bad karma that might have plagued either you or your family during the past year. But, of course, this is just an old wives' tale created to get men to do the household chores before they lie incapacitated on the sofa with both hands in the cookie jar—literally—for the entire 15-day duration of the celebration.

MUSIC

Loud, cheerful music is encouraged as a symbol of joy and prosperity. Legend has it that loud drums and cymbals were used to scare away a lion-like monster called *Nian* that was partial to a good meal of children in Ancient China. Keep a pair of noise-cancelling headphones handy, lest your brain gets fried before *Chap Goh Meh*, the final day of the festival, rolls around.

ANG POW

Traditionally, red packets represent the symbolic act of passing on good luck and fortune by older, married family members to children and young, unmarried relatives. But we think it's just an excuse made up by nosey aunts to plague us with the inevitable "When are you getting married *ah*?" question.

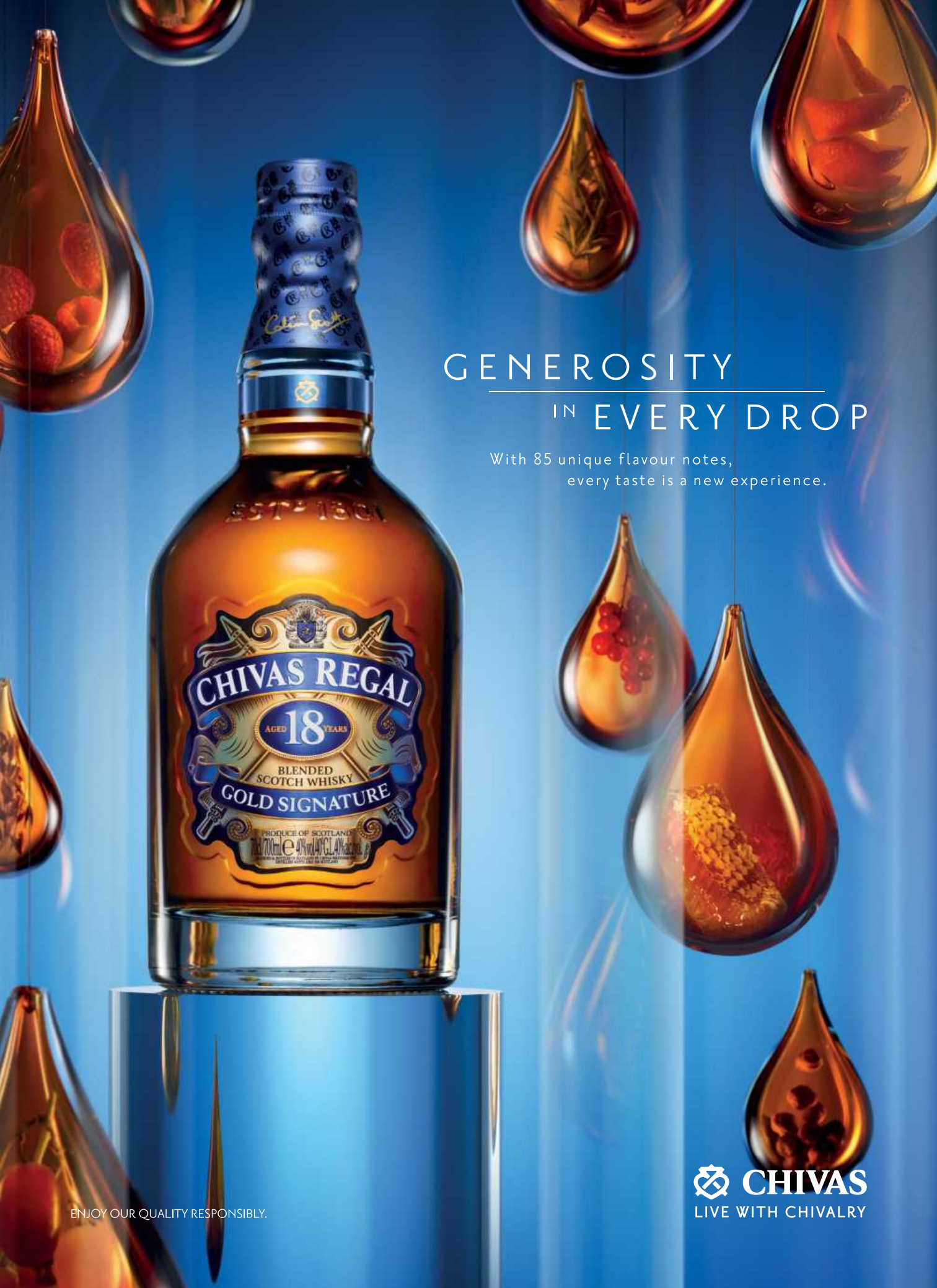
RED

Nothing symbolises Chinese New Year more, so wear something red, especially if you are visiting conservative relatives and friends. Avoid black and white, the colours of mourning. Of course, we don't expect you to look like a walking firecracker. Keep it casual and subtle instead.

FOOD

Yee sang, dumplings, tiger prawns, garoupa and all sorts of decadent nonsense might be considered auspicious, but all they'll really do is increase your waistline by a few inches. So we recommend that you pace yourself and book an appointment with your personal trainer *pronto*.

WORDS BY SIM WIE BOON.



GENEROSITY
IN EVERY DROP

With 85 unique flavour notes,
every taste is a new experience.

ENJOY OUR QUALITY RESPONSIBLY.

CHIVAS
LIVE WITH CHIVALRY

OYSTER PERPETUAL YACHT-MASTER 40

ROLEX



THE HOUR GLASS

LOT 10 S.C., G20-21, KUALA LUMPUR. TEL: (03) 2144 1620
PAVILION, LOT 2.41, KUALA LUMPUR. TEL: (03) 2148 8930
THE GARDENS MALL, LOT G-226 & 227, KUALA LUMPUR. TEL: (03) 2287 7830

WATCH FEATURED SUBJECT TO STOCK AVAILABILITY